

THE POET'S PROGRESS

THE POET'S PROGRESS

An Anthology of English Lyrical Verse

BOOKS V, VI, AND VII

CHOSEN BY

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*With Special Notes for
Indian Students*

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To
JOHN MASEFIELD
Poet Laureate

PREFACE

My purpose in selecting and arranging the poems in this anthology is twofold. My first desire has been to bring all who read it into contact with the finest work of the finest minds that have made lyric poetry their mode of self-expression. But this is far from being my sole aim. Though not subsidiary, it has been qualified by the endeavour to gather together pieces that, as far as material limitations permit, illustrate the historical development of English poetry; the changing attitude of English poets to nature, to society, and to themselves; the types of imagery employed by them, and the modes of their employment; the successive modifications of poetic form and of poetic diction; the whole poetic tradition, in short. For this reason the poems have been placed in approximately chronological sequence by taking each poet in the order of his year of birth, known or conjectured, and by printing his poems in a single group.

Material limitations have a bearing upon both these aims. It is not only that it is impossible to include in a single volume of this size every English lyrical poem that is worthy of immortality, but that, of necessity, a book of short poems fails to do justice to poets whose main achievements lie in other forms of their art. Even as it is, the net has had to be stretched to admit Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner*, Shelley's *Adonais*, and several other poems of nearly similar length:

Anthologies are frequently classified as those which represent the personal choice of the anthologist and those intended to contain only poems that common

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consent has approved. But even the most diffident and conventional compiler of an academic, or impersonal, anthology is obliged to rely to some extent upon his own taste. In the early reaches his opportunities of straying from the beaten path, and the temptations to stray from it, are comparatively few, but they multiply as he advances; and in an anthology that comes down to the present time, as this does, his private judgment ultimately becomes the sole criterion of selection. This was never more so than now, because there is in English poetry, near the end, a parting of the ways. Whether the sharp divergence from the poetic tradition that occurred about 1930 was a disaster or a blessing, and whether those who drew away after Mr. T. S. Eliot are of light or of darkness, is strenuously disputed by the poets and by their public, and Time has not yet announced his answer.

These are relatively minor cares. Of greater moment is the general canon of selection, with respect to which I think that too rigid an application of the logical distinction between lyrical and other poems is undesirable, since it must often be a matter of opinion whether in a poem the emotional quality is supreme, or whether the substantive element, be it narrative, descriptive, or abstract; and because to different readers (and the same reader in different moods) different features will make the strongest appeal. In this I have followed the example of numerous predecessors; and I have bowed gladly to custom by admitting some modern ballad poems; and I have stepped over convention a little way in the case of the few light poems that will be found among the rest.

* * *

With the exceptions of the break mentioned above and the beginning and end of the classical age the development of English poetic art has been continuous.

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Nevertheless, its various phases have come to be so opposed that a distinctive character attaches to each period. Therefore, in order to illuminate the contrasts, the poems have been divided into Books. Book Five represents the Romantic period, which I have separated from the larger part of the nineteenth century (Book Six) about the year 1830. Arbitrarily, but on practical grounds, I have fixed the commencement of contemporary poetry (Book Seven) at 1900.

Brief explanations of two textual matters are needed.

- (1) Deliberate departures from the conventional spelling by contemporary poets have been retained unaltered.
- (2) The earlier poets did not habitually ascribe titles to their lyrical poems, and some of the moderns, Wordsworth in particular, have, less consistently, followed the same custom; and many sonnets have no titles. If the poet did not furnish a title for his poem, I have not presumed to interfere with his intentions by foisting upon it one manufactured by myself; but, in order to supply the reader with the means of reference indispensable in an anthology, I have attached a label, usually by quoting the whole or part of the first line of the poem.

J. H. JAGGER.

Noibury, August, 1948.

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160. *I wandered lonely as a cloud*

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee;
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company;
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

William Wordsworth

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161. *To the Cuckoo*

O blithe new-comer, I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice:
O Cuckoo, shall I call thee bird,
Or but a wandering voice?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear;
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the spring.
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listened to; that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen.

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And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessèd bird, the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place,
That is fit home for thee.

William Wordsworth

162. *The Solitary Reaper*

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland lass,
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass.
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen, for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

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Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

William Wordsworth

163. *My heart leaps up when I behold*

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began,
So is it now I am a man,
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die.
The child is father of the man:
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

164. *Lines written in early spring*

I heard a thousand blended notes
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played;
Their thoughts I cannot measure;
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

William Wordsworth

THE POET'S PROGRESS

165. *She was a phantom of delight*

She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman too.
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death:
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill:
A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

166. *Yarrow unvisited*

1803

From Stirling Castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled,
Had trod the banks of Clyde and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled;
And when we came to Clovenford,
Then said my winsome marrow
"Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,
And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, frae Selkirk town,
Who have been buying, selling,
Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own;
Each maiden to her dwelling.
On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow,
But we will downward with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

"There's Gala Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us;
And Dryburgh, where with chiming Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus;
There's pleasant Tiviotdale, a land
Made blithe with plough and harrow:
Why throw away a needful day
To go in search of Yarrow?

"What's Yarrow but a river bare
That glides the dark hills under?
There are a thousand such elsewhere
As worthy of your wonder."
Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn;
My true love sighed for sorrow,
And looked me in the face, to think
I thus could speak of Yarrow.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

" O green " said I " are Yarrow's holms,
And sweet is Yarrow flowing!
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,
But we will leave it growing.
O'er hilly path and open strath
We'll wander Scotland thorough;
But, though so near, we will not turn
Into the dale of Yarrow.

" Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow;
The swart on still St. Mary's Lake
Float double, swan and shadow.
We will not see them; will not go
To-day, nor yet to-morrow;
Enough if in our hearts we know
There's such a place as Yarrow.

" Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown;
It must, or we shall rue it:
We have a vision of our own,
Ah! why should we undo it?
The treasured dreams of times long past,
We'll keep them, winsome marrow;
For when we're there, although 'tis fair,
'Twill be another Yarrow.

" If care with freezing years should come,
And wandering seem but folly,
Should we be loth to stir from home,
And yet be melancholy;
Should life be dull, and spirits low,
'Twill soothe us in our sorrow
That earth has something yet to show,
The bonny holms of Yarrow ".

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

167. *Yarrow visited*

September 1814

And is this—Yarrow?—*This* the stream,

Of which my fancy cherished

So faithfully, a waking dream,

An image that hath perished?

O that some minstrel's harp were near

To utter notes of gladness

And chase this silence from the air,

That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows

With uncontrolled meanderings;

Nor have these eyes by greener hills

Been soothed, in all my wanderings.

And, through her depths, St. Mary's Lake

Is visibly delighted;

For not a feature of those hills

Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow Vale,

Save where that pearly whiteness

Is round the rising sun diffused,

A tender hazy brightness;

Mild dawn of promise! that excludes

All profitless dejection;

Though not unwilling here to admit

A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous flower

Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?

His bed perchance was yon smooth mound

On which the herd is feeding:

And haply from this crystal pool,

Now peaceful as the morning,

The water-wraith ascended thrice,

And gave his doleful warning.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Delicious is the lay that sings
The haunts of happy lovers,
The path that leads them to the grove,
The leafy grove that covers:
And pity sanctifies the verse
That paints, by strength of sorrow,
The unconquerable strength of love;
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation:
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy:
The grace of forest charms decayed,
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated nature;
And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a ruin hoary,
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in,
For manhood to enjoy his strength,
And age to wear away in;
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
A covert for protection
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there—
The brood of chaste affection.

BOOK FIVE

How sweet on this autumnal day
The wild-wood fruits to gather,
And on my true love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather!
And what if I enwreathed my own?
'Twere no offence to reason;
The sober hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see; but not by sight alone,
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee;
A ray of fancy still survives;
Her sunshine plays upon thee.
Thy ever youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure;
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe
Accordant to the measure.

The vapours linger round the heights,
They melt, and soon must vanish;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine--
Sad thought, which I would banish,
But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow,
Will dwell with me to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

William Wordsworth

168. *Ode on intimations of immortality from
recollections of early childhood*

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem

Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,

The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

The rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the rose;
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong.
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong:
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,

BOOK FIVE

And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday;
Thou child of joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
shepherd boy!

Ye blessèd creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal;
The fulness of your bliss I feel—I feel it all.

O evil day, if I were sullen
While earth herself is adorning
This sweet May morning;
And the children are culling
On every side
In a thousand valleys far and wide
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm:
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear.

But there's a tree, of many, one,
A single field which I have looked upon;
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
The pansy at my feet

Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Heaven lies about us in our infancy.
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy.

The youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is nature's priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended.

At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a mother's mind
 And no unworthy aim,

 The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate, man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' darling of a pigmy size;
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes;
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly learned art,—

 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral;

 And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:

 Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
 But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,

BOOK FIVE

And with new joy and pride
The little actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the persons, down to palsied age,
That life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy soul's immensity;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,
Mighty prophet! Seer blest!

On whom those truths do rest
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
A presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life.

O joy, that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive.

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:

Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise;

But for those obstinate questionings

Of sense and outward things,

Fallings from us, vanishings,

Blank misgivings of a creature

Moving about in worlds not realized,

High instincts, before which our mortal nature

Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:

But for those first affections,

Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may,

Are yet the fountain light of all our day,

Are yet a master light of all our seeing;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make

Our noisy years seem moments in the being

Of the eternal silence: truths that wake,

To perish never;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,

Nor man nor boy,

Nor all that is at enmity with joy,

Can utterly abolish or destroy.

Hence in a season of calm weather

Though inland far we be,

Our souls have sight of that immortal sea

Which brought us hither;

Can in a moment travel thither,

And see the children sport upon the shore,

And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then, sing, ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song.

And let the young lambs bound

As to the tabor's sound.

BOOK FIVE

We, in thought, will join your throng
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May.

What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,

Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;

We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;

In the primal sympathy

Which having been must ever be;

In the soothing thoughts that spring

Out of human suffering;

In the faith that looks through death,

In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O, ye fountains, meadows, hills, and groves,
Forbode not any severing of our loves.

Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;

I only have relinquished one delight

To live beneath your more habitual sway;

I love the brooks which down their channels fret,

Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;

The innocent brightness of a new-born day

Is lovely yet;

The clouds that gather round the setting sun

Do take a sober colouring from an eye

That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;

Another race hath been, and other palms are won.

Thanks to the human heart by which we live,

Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,

To me the meanest flower that blows can give

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

William Wordsworth

THE POET'S PROGRESS

169. *Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room*

Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room;
And hermits are contented with their cells,
And students with their pensive citadels;
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for bloom,
High as the highest peak of Furness fells,
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:
In truth the prison unto which we doom
Ourselves no prison is: and hence for me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
Within the sonnet's scanty plot of ground;
Pleased if some souls (for such there needs must be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

William Wordsworth

170. *Scorn not the sonnet*

Scorn not the sonnet; critic, you have frowned,
Mindless of its just honours; with this key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
With it Camões soothed an exile's grief:
The sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
His visionary brow: a glow-worm lamp,
It cheered mild Spenser, called from faery-land,
To struggle through dark ways; and when a danger
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few.

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

171. *Composed upon Westminster Bridge*

September 3rd, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep;
The river glideth at his own sweet will;
Dear God, the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still.

William Wordsworth

172. *The world is too much with us*

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon.
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;—
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn,
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

William Wordsworth

THE POET'S PROGRESS

173. *Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour*

Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
O raise us up, return to us again,
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free.
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

William Wordsworth

174. *Written in London September, 1802*

O friend, I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, oppressed
To think that now our life is only dressed
For show. Mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,
Or groom. We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest;
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense—
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

175. *It is not to be thought of that the flood*

It is not to be thought of that the flood
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwithstood,"
Roused though it be full often to a mood
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,—
That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
Should perish, and to evil and to good
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
Armoury of the invincible knights of old:
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held. In everything we are sprung
Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

William Wordsworth

176. *Thought of a Briton on the subjugation
of Switzerland*

Two voices are there; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains, each a mighty voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice;
They were thy chosen music, Liberty.
There came a tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him, but hast vainly striven:
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft;
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left;
For, high-souled maid, what sorrow would it be
That mountain floods should thunder as before,
And ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful voice be heard by thee!

William Wordsworth

THE POET'S PROGRESS

177. *November, 1806*

Another year! Another deadly blow!
Another mighty empire overthrown!
And we are left, or shall be left, alone,
The last that dare to struggle with the foe.
'Tis well. From this day forward we shall know
That in ourselves our safety must be sought;
That by our own right hands it must be wrought;
That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.
O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer!
We shall exult, if they who rule the land
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant; not a servile band
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand.

William Wordsworth

178. *On the extinction of the Venetian Republic*

Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West; the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of liberty.
She was a maiden city, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay?
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

179. *Inside of King's College Chapel,
Cambridge*

Tax not the royal saint with vain expense,
With ill-matched aims the architect who planned,
Albeit labouring for a scanty band
Of white-robed scholars only, this immense
And glorious work of fine intelligence.
Give all thou canst; high heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more:
So deemed the man who fashioned for the sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof,
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells,
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering—and wandering on as loth to die;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

William Wordsworth

180. *Song*

“ A weary lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine;
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine.
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green—
No more of me you knew,
My love,
No more of me you knew.
“ This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow
Ere we two meet again.”

THE POET'S PROGRESS

He turned his charger as he spake
Upon the river shore,
He gave his bridle-reins a shake,
Said "Adieu for evermore,
My love,
And adieu for evermore".

Sir Walter Scott

181. *O Brignall Banks*

O Brignall banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen.

And as I rode by Dalton Hall

Beneath the turrets high,
A maiden on the castle wall
Was singing merrily:

"O Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English queen."

"If, maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we
That dwell by dale and down.

And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed
As blithe as Queen of May."

Yet sung she "Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English queen.

BOOK FIVE

" I read you by your bugle-horn
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn
To keep the king's greenwood."
" A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night."
Yet sung she " Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay;
I would I were with Edmund there
To reign his Queen of May!

" With burnished brand and musketoon
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold dragoon
That lists the tuck of drum."
" I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum
My comrades take the spear.
And O, though Brignall banks be fair
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare
Would reign my Queen of May.

" Maiden, a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die;
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I.
And when I'm with my comrades met
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now."

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen.

Sir Walter Scott

182. *Jock of Hazeldean*

“ Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride:
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen ”—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

“ Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington
And lord of Langleydale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen ”—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

“ A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair;
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you, the foremost o' them a',
Shall ride our forest queen ”—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

BOOK FIVE

The kirk was decked at morning-tide;
The tapers glimmered fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there.
They sought her baith by bower and ha';
The ladie was not seen;
She's o'er the Border, and awa'
Wi' Jock o' Hazeldean.

Sir Walter Scott

183. *Hunting Song*

Waken, lords and ladies gay.
On the mountain dawns the day.
All the jolly chase is here
With hawk and horse and hunting-spear;
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily mingle they;
“Waken, lords and ladies gay”.

Waken, lords and ladies gay.
The mist has left the mountain gray;
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;
And foresters have busy been
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay;
“Waken, lords and ladies gay”.

Waken, lords and ladies gay.
To the greenwood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

We can show the marks he made
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed;
You shall see him brought to bay;
"Waken, lords and ladies gay".

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay.
Tell them youth and mirth and glee
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman, who can balk,
Stanch as hound and fleet as hawk?
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

Sir Walter Scott

184. *Coronach*

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font reappearing
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow.

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are serest,
But our flower was in flushing
When blighting was nearest.

BOOK FIVE

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever.

Sir Walter Scott

185. *Lochinvar*

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Esk river where ford there was none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby Gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late;
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of young Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bridesmen, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word),
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

correi: hillside.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

"I long wooed your daughter; my suit you denied;
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide;
And now I am come, with this lost love of mine
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet, the knight took it up;
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup;
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar;
"Now tread we a measure" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and
plume,
And the bride-maidens whispered "'Twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door and the charger stood
near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung.
"She is won! We are gone! Over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow" quoth young
Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby
clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they
ran;

BOOK FIVE

There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

Sir Walter Scott

186. *Harold's Song*

O listen, listen, ladies gay!

No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

“ Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew;
And, gentle ladye, deign to stay;
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

“ The blackening wave is edged with white;
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly;
The fishers have heard the water-sprite,
Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

“ Last night the gifted seer did view
A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay;
Then stay thee, fair, in Ravensheuch;
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?”

“ 'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

“ 'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide
If 'tis not filled by Rosabelle.”

THE POET'S PROGRESS

O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from caverned Hawthornden.

Seemed all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffined lie,
Each baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seemed all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmered all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair.
So they still blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle;
Each one the holy vault doth hold,
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle.

And each St. Clair was buried there
With candle, with book, and with knell;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

Sir Walter Scott

BOOK FIVE

187. *Breathes there a man with soul so dead?*

Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said
" This is my own, my native land ";
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned
As home his footsteps he hath turned
From wandering on a foreign strand?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.

O Caledonia, stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child,
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires, what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band
That knits me to thy rugged strand?

Sir Walter Scott

THE POET'S PROGRESS

188. *The Bonnets of Bonny Dundee*

To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver'se who spoke:
" Ere the king's crown shall fall there are crowns to be
broke;

So let each cavalier who loves honour and me
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

" Come fill up my cup; come fill up my can;
Come saddle your horses, and call up your men;
Come open the West Port, and let me gang free;
And it's room for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee ".

Dundee he is mounted; he rides up the street;
The bells are rung backward; the drums they are beat.
But the Provost, douce man, said " Just e'en let him be;
The gude town is well quit of that deil of Dundee ".

As he rode down the sanctified bends of the Bow
Ilk carline was flyting and shaking her pow;
But the young plants of grace they looked couthie and
slee,
Thinking " Luck to thy bonnet, thou Bonny Dundee ".

With sour-featured Whigs the Grassmarket was crammed,
As if half the west had set tryst to be hanged;
There was spite in each look, there was fear in each e'e,
As they watched for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee.

These cowls of Kilmarnock had spits and had spears,
And long-hafted gullies to kill cavaliers;
But they shrunk to close-heads, and the causeway was
free,
At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

He spurred to the foot of the proud Castle rock,
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly spoke;

BOOK FIVE

" Let Mons Meg and her marrow speak twa words or
three

For the love of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee".

The Gordon demands of him which way he goes;
" Where'er shall direct me the shade of Montrose.
Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings of me,
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

" There are hills beyond Pentland and lands beyond
Forth;

If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's chiefs in the
north;

There are wild duniewassals, three thousand times
three,

Will cry ' Hoigh ' for the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

" There's brass on the target of barked bull-hide;
There's steel in the scabbard that dangles beside,
The brass shall be burnished, the steel shall flash free,
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

" Away to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks;
Ere I own an usurper I'll couch with the fox;
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of your glee;
You have not seen the last of my bonnets and me."

He waved his proud hand, and the trumpets were
blown,

The kettle-drums clashed, and the horsemen rode on,
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's lee
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup; come fill up my can;
Come saddle the horses and call up the men;
Come open your gates, and let me gae free,
For it's up with the bonnets of Bonny Dundee.

Sir Walter Scott

THE POET'S PROGRESS

189. *Kubla Khan*

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan

A stately pleasure-dome decree,
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But O, that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place, as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover.
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil
seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced;
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran;
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war.

BOOK FIVE

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
 Floated midway on the waves,
Where was heard the mingled measure
 From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice.

A damsel with a dulcimer
 In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
 And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
 Could I revive within me,
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware, beware
His flashing eyes, his floating hair:
Weave a circle round him thrice,
 And close your eyes with holy dread,
 For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise!

S. T. Coleridge

THE POET'S PROGRESS

190. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

PART I

An ancient
mariner
meeteth three
gallants
bidden to a
wedding
feast, and
detaineth
one.

It is an ancient mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
"By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?"

The bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand;
"There was a ship" quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!"
Eftsoons his hand dropped he.

The wed-
ding-guest is
spellbound by
the eye of the
old seafaring
man, and
constrained
to hear his
tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The wedding-guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The mariner hath his will.

The wedding-guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed mariner.

"The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

BOOK FIVE

The mariner
tells how the
ship sailed
southward
with a good
wind and fair
weather, till
it reached the
Line.

The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he;
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon——”
The wedding-guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The wedding-
guest heareth
the bridal
music, but
the mariner
continueth
his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The wedding-guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed mariner.

The ship
drawn by a
storm toward
the South
Pole.

“ And now the storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o’ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The land of
ice, and of
fearful
sounds,
where no
living thing
was to be
seen.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound.

Till a great
sea-bird,
called the
albatross,
came through
the snow-fog,
and was re-
ceived with
great joy and
hospitality.

At length did cross an albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through.

And lo! the
albatross
proveth a
bird of good
omen, and
followeth the
ship as it re-
turned north-
ward through
fog and float-
ing ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo.

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moonshine."

The ancient
mariner in-
hospitably
killeth the
pious bird of
good omen

" God save thee, ancient mariner,
From the fiends that plague thee thus!
Why look'st thou so?"—" With my crossbow
I shot the albatross.

BOOK FIVE

PART II

"The sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo.

His ship-
mates cry out
against the
ancient
mariner for
killing the
bird of good
luck

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch, said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow.

But when the
fog cleared
off, they
justify the
same, and
thus make
themselves
accomplices
in the

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious sun uprist:
Then all averred I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair
breeze con-
tinues, the
ship enters
the Pacific
Ocean, and
sails north-
ward, even
till it reaches
the Line

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

The ship hath
been sudden-
ly becalmed.

Down dropped the breeze, the sails dropped
down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the albatross begins
to be
avenged.

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ,
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

A spirit had
followed
them; one
of the in-
visible in-
habitants of
this planet,
neither depar-
ted souls nor

And some in dreams assurèd were
Of the spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Com-
stantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted They are very
numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

BOOK FIVE

The ship-
mates in
their sore
distress
would fain
throw the
whole guilt
on the
ancient
mariner: in
sign whereof
they hang
the dead sea-
bird round
his neck.

Ah well a-day, what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III

The ancient
mariner be-
holdeth a
sign in the
element afar
off.

" There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time, a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye!
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist.
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged, and tacked, and veered.

At its nearer
approach, it
seemeth him
to be a ship;
and at a dear
ransom he
freeth his
speech from
the bonds of
thrust.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood.
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail, a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:

A flash of joy; Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And horror
follows. For
can it be a
ship that
comes on-
ward without
wind or tide?

See, see! (I cried) she tacks no more
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel.

The western wave was all aflame,
The day was wellnigh done.
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad, bright sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the sun.

It seemeth
him but the
skeleton of a
ship.

And straight the sun was flecked with bars
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!),
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

Alas (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossameres?

And its ribs
are seen as
bars on the
face of the
setting sun.
The Spectre-
woman and
her Death-
mate, and no
other, on
board the
skeleton ship.
Like vessel,
like crew!

Are those her ribs through which the sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

BOOK FIVE

Death and
Life-in-
Death have
diced for the
ship's crew,
and she (the
latter) win-
neth the
ancient
mariner.

No twilight
within the
courts of the

The naked hulk alongside came
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won; I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up.
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip.
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed
white;

At the rising
of the moon,

From the sails the dew did drip,
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after
another,

One after one, by the star-dogged moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

His ship-
mates drop
down dead.

Four times fifty living men
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan),
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-
Death begins
her work on
the ancient
mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly;
'They fled to bliss or woe.'
And every soul, it passed me by
Like the whizz of my crossbow."

THE POET'S PROGRESS

PART IV

The wedding-guest feareth
that a spirit
is talking to
him.

" I fear thee, ancient mariner;
I fear thy skinny hand.
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

But the an-
cient mariner
assureth him
of his bodily
life, and pro-
ceedeth to
relate his
horrible
penance.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand so brown."
" Fear not, fear not, thou wedding-guest;
This body dropped not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth
the creatures
of the calm.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

And envieth
that they
should live,
and so many
lie dead.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gushed,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the
sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

BOOK FIVE

But the curse
liveth for him
in the eye of
the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh, more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye.
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In his loneliness and
fixedness he
yearneth
towards the
journeying
moon, and
the stars that
still sojourn,
yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them and
is their appointed rest and their native country and their own natural homes,
which they enter unannounced as lords that are certainly expected, and yet
there is a silent joy at their arrival.

The moving moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide;
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside;

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

By the light
of the moon
he beholdeth
God's crea-
tures of the
great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

**Their beauty
and their
happiness.** O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
**He blesseth
them in his
heart.** And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

**The spell
begins to
break.** The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V

“O sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole.
To Mary Queen the praise be given;
She sent the gentle sleep from heaven,
That slid into my soul.

**By grace of
the holy
Mother, the
ancient
mariner is
refreshed
with rain.** The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

BOOK FIVE

He heareth
sounds and
seeth strange
sights and
commotions
in the sky and
the element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life;
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about;
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black
cloud;
The moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The moon was at its side;
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The bodies of
the ship's
crew are in-
spired, and
the ship
moves on;

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on.
Beneath the lightning and the moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up-blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools.
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said naught to me."

But not by
the souls of
the men, nor
by demons of
earth or
middle air,
but by a
blessed troop
of angelic
spirits, sent
down by the
invocation of
the guardian
saint.

"I fear thee, ancient mariner."
"Be calm, thou wedding-guest:
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corpses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned they dropped their
arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their
mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

BOOK FIVE

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome spirit from the South Pole carries on the ship as far as the Line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion;
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then, like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The polar
spirit's fel-
low-demons,
the invisible
inhabitants of
the element,
take part in
his wrong,
and two of
them relate,
one to the
other, that
penance long
and heavy for
the ancient
mariner hath
been ac-
corded to the
polar spirit,
who returneth
southward.

How long in that same fit I lay
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one. 'Is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI

First Voice:

"'But tell me; tell me; speak again,
Thy soft response renewing;
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?'

Second Voice:

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the moon is cast—

BOOK FIVE

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

First Voice:

The mariner
hath been cast
into a trance,
for the angelic
power causeth
the vessel to
drive north-
ward faster
than human
life could
endure.

' But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

Second Voice:

' The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly, more high, more high,
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the mariner's trance is abated.'

The super-
natural
motion is re-
tarded; the
mariner
awakes, and
his penance
begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night; the moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is
finally ex-
piated.

And now this spell was snapped: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring;
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze;
On me alone it blew.

And the an-
cient mariner
beholdeth his
native
country.

O dream of joy! is this indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God;
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn.
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the moon.

BOOK FIVE

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

The angelic
spirits leave
the dead
bodies,

And the bay was white with silent light
Till, rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

And appear in
their own
forms of
light.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck;
O Christ, what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight.
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand;
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but O, the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The pilot and the pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven, it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

I saw a third; I heard his voice:
It is the hermit good;
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away
The albatross's blood.

PART VII

**The hermit of
the wood.** "This hermit good lives in that wood

Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with mariners
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve;
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk;
'Why, this is strange, I trow.
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?'

**Approacheth
the ship with
wonder.**

'Strange, by my faith!' the hermit said;
'And they answered not our cheer.
The planks look warped; and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere;
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owllet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

BOOK FIVE

Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look
(The pilot made reply);
I am a-feared.' 'Push on, push on!'
Said the hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient mariner is saved in the pilot's boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips; the pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha, ha!' quoth he 'full plain I see
The devil knows how to row.'

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land.
The hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient
mariner
earnestly en-
treateth the
hermit to
shrive him;
and the pen-
ance of life
falls on him.

' O shrive me, shrive me, holy man!
The hermit crossed his brow.
' Say quick ' quoth he; ' I bid thee say
What manner of man art thou?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woeful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

And ever
and anon
throughout
his future life
an agony
constraineth
him to travel
from land to
land;

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
' To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door?
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark, the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer.

O wedding-guest, this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God Himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

BOOK FIVE

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company.

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay.

And to teach,
by his own
example,
love and
reverence to
all things
that God
made and
loveth.

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou wedding-guest;
He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the wedding-guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn.

S. T. Coleridge

THE POET'S PROGRESS

191. *My days among the dead are passed*

My days among the dead are passed;
 Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
 The mighty minds of old:
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal
 And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
 How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedewed
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the dead; with them
 I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
 Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the dead; anon
 My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
 Through all futurity;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

Robert Southey

BOOK FIVE

192. *Many may yet recall the hours*

Many may yet recall the hours
That saw thy lover's chosen flowers
Nodding and dancing in the shade
Thy dark and wavy tresses made.
On many a brain is pictured yet
Thy languid eye's dim violet.
But who among them all foresaw
How the sad snows that never thaw
Upon that head one day should lie
And love but glimmer from that eye?

Walter Savage Landor

193. *Past ruined Ilion Helen lives*

Past ruined Ilion Helen lives;
Alcestis rises from the shades;
Verse calls them forth; 'tis verse that gives
Immortal youth to mortal maids.

Soon shall oblivion's deepening veil
Hide all the peopled hills you see,
The gay, the proud—while lovers hail
These many summers you and me.

Walter Savage Landor

194. *Hohenlinden*

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed
Each horseman drew his battle blade
And furious every charger neighed
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
Then rushed the steed, to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of heaven
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow;
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn; but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich, all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few shall part where many meet;
The snow shall be their winding-sheet;
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

Thomas Campbell

BOOK FIVE

195. *The Mariners of England*

Ye mariners of England,
That guard our native seas,
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze,
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe:
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave;
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And ocean was their grave.
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below,
As they roar on the shore
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn,
Till danger's troubled night depart,
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean warriors,
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

Thomas Campbell

196. *Men of England*

Men of England, who inherit
Rights that cost your sires their blood,
Men whose undegenerate spirit
Has been proved on field and flood,

By the foes you've fought uncounted,
By the glorious deeds ye've done,
Trophies captured, breaches mounted,
Navies conquered, kingdoms won,

Yet remember, England gathers
Thence but fruitless wreaths of fame,
If the freedom of your fathers
Glow not in your hearts the same.

What are monuments of bravery
Where no public virtues bloom?
What avail in lands of slavery
Trophied temples, arch, and tomb?

BOOK FIVE

Pageants. Let the world revere us
For our people's rights and laws,
And the breasts of civic heroes
Bared in freedom's holy cause.

Yours are Hampden's, Russell's, glory;
Sidney's matchless shade is yours;
Martyrs in heroic story,
Worth a hundred Agincourts.

We're the sons of sires that baffled
Crowned and mitred tyranny;
They defied the field and scaffold
For their birthrights. So will we.

Thomas Campbell

197. *A Canadian Boat Song*

Faintly as tolls the evening chime,
Our voices keep tune and our oars keep time.
Soon as the woods on shore look dim,
We'll sing at St. Ann's our parting hymn.
Row, brothers, row, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near, and the daylight's past.

Why should we yet our sail unfurl?
There is not a breath the blue wave to curl,
But when the wind blows off the shore,
Oh, sweetly we'll rest our weary oar.
Blow, breezes, blow, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near, and the daylight's past.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Utawa's tide! this trembling moon
Shall see us float over thy surges soon.
Saint of this green isle! hear our prayers,
Oh, grant us cool heavens and favouring airs.
Blow, breezes, blow, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near, and the daylight's past.

Thomas Moore

198. *The harp that once through Tara's halls*

The harp that once through Tara's halls
The soul of beauty shed
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls
As if that soul were fled.
So sleeps the pride of former days,
So glory's thrill is o'er,
And hearts that once beat high for praise
Now feel that pulse no more.

No more to chiefs and ladies bright
The harp of Tara swells;
The chord alone that breaks at night
Its tale of ruin tells.
Thus freedom now so seldom wakes,
The only throb she gives
Is when some heart indignant breaks
To show that still she lives.

Thomas Moore

BOOK FIVE

199. *The Minstrel Boy*

The minstrel boy to the wars is gone;
In the ranks of death you'll find him;
His father's sword he has girded on,
And his wild harp slung behind him.
"Land of song," said the warrior bard
"Though all the world betrays thee,
One sword, at least, thy rights shall guard;
One faithful harp shall praise thee."

The minstrel fell; but the foeman's chain
Could not bring his proud soul under;
The harp he loved ne'er spoke again,
For he tore its chords asunder;
And said "No chains shall sully thee,
Thou soul of love and bravery;
Thy songs were made for the brave and free;
They shall never sound in slavery."

Thomas Moore

200. *She is far from the land*

She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps
And lovers are round her sighing:
But coldly she turns from their gaze and weeps,
For her heart in his grave is lying.

She sings the wild songs of her dear native plains,
Every note which he loved awaking:
Ah, little they think who delight in her strains
How the heart of the minstrel is breaking.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

He had lived for his love, for his country he died;
They were all that to life had entwined him;
Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,
Nor long will his love stay behind him.

Oh, make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,
When they promise a glorious morrow;
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the west,
From her own lovèd island of sorrow.

Thomas Moore

201. *A wet sheet and a flowing sea*

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While like the eagle free
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

O for a soft and gentle wind!
I heard a fair one cry;
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornèd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
And hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud;

BOOK FIVE

The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashes free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

Allan Cunningham

202. *Battle Song*

Day, like our souls, is fiercely dark;
What then? 'Tis day.
We sleep no more; the cock crows—hark!
To arms! away!
They come! they come! the knell is rung
Of us or them;
Wide o'er their march the pomp is flung
Of gold and gem.
What collared hound of lawless sway,
To famine dear,
What pensioned slave of Attila,
Leads in the rear?
Come they from Scythian wilds afar,
Our blood to spill?
Wear they the livery of the Czar?
They do his will.
Nor tasselled silk, nor epaulette,
Nor plume, nor torse—
No splendour gilds, all sternly met,
Our foot and horse;
But, dark and still, we inly glow,
Condensed in ire.
Strike, tawdry slaves, and ye shall know
Our gloom is fire.
In vain your pomp, ye evil powers,
Insults the land;
Wrongs, vengeance, and the cause are ours,
And God's right hand.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Madmen! they trample into snakes
The wormy clod;
Like fire, beneath their feet awakes
The sword of God;
Behind, before, above, below,
They rouse the brave;
Where'er they go, they make a foe,
Or find a grave.

Ebenezer Elliot

203. *The Destruction of Sennacherib*

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of his spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest, when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest, when autumn hath
blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew
still.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his
pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

BOOK FIVE

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.

Lord Byron

204. *She walks in beauty*

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes,
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face,
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek and o'er that brow
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent.

Lord Byron

THE POET'S PROGRESS

205. *The Isles of Greece*

The isles of Greece! the isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung.
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse:
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' Islands of the Blest.

The mountains look on Marathon;
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dreamed that Greece might still be free;
For standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations;—all were his.
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set where were they?

And where are they? and where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now,
The heroic bosom beats no more.
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

BOOK FIVE

'Tis something in the dearth of fame,
Though linked among a fettered race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush, for Greece a tear.

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest?
Must *we* but blush?—Our fathers bled.
Earth, render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead;
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylæ.

What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no; the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer "Let one living head,
But one, arise; we come, we come"
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain; in vain: strike other chords;
Fill high the cup with Samian wine.
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine.
Hark, rising to the ignoble call,
How answers each bold Bacchanal.

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet;
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus gave;
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine.

We will not think of themes like these;
It made Anacreon's song divine;

He served—but served Polycrates;
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese

Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades.

O that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind;
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine;

On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line

Such as the Doric mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks;

They have a king who buys and sells.
In native swords and native ranks

The only hope of courage dwells.
But Turkish force and Latin fraud
Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine.

Our virgins dance beneath the shade;
I see their glorious black eyes shine;

But, gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

BOOK FIVE

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine;
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

Lord Byron

206. *Lines from "The Bride of Abydos"*

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime;
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine;
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul in her bloom;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute;
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?
'Tis the clime of the East; 'tis the land of the sun;
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?
Oh, wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which they tell.

Lord Byron

THE POET'S PROGRESS

207. *Maid of Athens, ere we part*

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart;
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest;
Hear my vow before I go;
Ζώη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

By those tresses unconfined,
Wooed by each Ægean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' looming rings;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζώη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste,
By that zone-encircled waist,
By all the token flowers that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζώη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens, I am gone;
Think of me, sweet, when alone;
Though I fly to Istanboul,
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No.
Ζώη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

Lord Byron

Ζώη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ My soul, I love you.

208. *Chorus in "Hellas"*^a

The world's great age begins anew,
 The golden years return,
 The earth doth like a snake renew
 Her winter weeds outworn:
 Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
 Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
 From waves serener far;
 A new Peneus rolls his fountains
 Against the morning star;
 Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
 Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
 Fraught with a later prize;
 Another Orpheus sings again,
 And loves, and weeps, and dies;
 A new Ulysses leaves once more
 Calypso for his native shore.

O write no more the tale of Troy,
 If earth Death's scroll must be;
 Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
 Which dawns upon the free,
 Although a subtler Sphinx renew
 Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
 And to remoter time
 Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
 The splendour of its prime;
 And leave, if nought so bright may live,
 All earth can take or heaven can give.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Then all who fell, than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued:
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

O cease! must hate and death return?
Cease! must men kill and die?
Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy.
The world is weary of the past;
O might it die or rest at last.

P. B. Shelley

209. *To Night*

Swiftly walk over the western wave,
Spirit of night.
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear
Which make thee terrible and dear.
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star-inwrought.
Blind with thine hair the eyes of day,
Kiss her until she be wearied out;
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand.
Come, long-sought!

BOOK FIVE

When I arose and saw the dawn,
 I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
 And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary day turned to her rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
 I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
 "Wouldst thou me?"
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
 Murmured like a noontide bee,
"Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me?" And I replied,
 " No, not thee ".

Death will come when thou art dead,
 Soon, too soon;
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
 Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, beloved Night;
Swift be thine approaching flight;
 Come soon, soon!

P. B. Shelley

210. *To* ———

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory.
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.
Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

P. B. Shelley

THE POET'S PROGRESS

211. *The Cloud*

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits.
Over earth and ocean with gentle motion
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The spirit he loves remains:
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

BOOK FIVE

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack
When the morning star shines dead;
As on the jag of a mountain crag
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardours of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest on mine æery nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden with white fire laden
Whom mortals call the moon
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof
The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the sun's throne in a burning zone,
And the moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim,
When the whirlwinds my banners unfurl.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof:
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch through which I march
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-coloured bow;
The sphere-fire above its soft colours wove
While the moist earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,
And the nursling of the sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain, when with never a stain
The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
And out of the caverns of rain.
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the
tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

P. B. Shelley

212. *Arethusa*

Arethusa arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceraunian mountains,
From cloud and from crag,
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains.
She leapt down the rocks
With her rainbow locks
Streaming among the streams;

BOOK FIVE

Her steps paved with green
The downward ravine
Which slopes to the western gleams.
And gliding and springing
She went, ever singing
In murmurs as soft as sleep.
The earth seemed to love her,
And heaven smiled above her,
As she lingered toward the deep.

Then Alpheus bold
On his glacier cold
With his trident the mountains strook,
And opened a chasm
In the rocks; with the spasm
All Erymanthus shook.
And the black south wind
It concealed behind
The urns of the silent snow,
And earthquake and thunder
Did rend in sunder
The bars of the springs below.
The beard and the hair
Of the river-god were
Seen through the torrent's sweep,
As he followed the light
Of the fleet nymph's flight
To the brink of the Dorian deep.

"O, save me; oh, guide me;
And bid the deep hide me;
For he grasps me now by the hair."
The loud ocean heard,
To its blue depth stirred,
And divided at her prayer;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And under the water
The earth's white daughter
Fled like a sunny beam.
Behind her descended
Her billows, unblended
With the brackish Dorian stream.
Like a gloomy stain
On the emerald main
Alpheus rushed behind,
As an eagle pursuing
A dove to its ruin
Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

Under the bowers
Where the ocean powers
Sit on their pearlèd thrones;
Through the coral woods
Of the weltering floods,
Over heaps of unvalued stones;
Through the dim beams
Which amid the streams
Weave a network of coloured light;
And under the caves
Where the shadowy waves
Are as green as the forest's night;
Outspeeding the shark
And the swordfish dark,
Under the ocean foam,
And up through the rifts
Of the mountain cliffs
They passed to their Dorian home.

And now, from their fountains
In Enna's mountains,
Down one vale where the morning basks,

BOOK FIVE

Like friends once parted,
Grown single-hearted,
They ply their watery tasks.
At sunrise they leap
From their cradles steep
In the cave of the shelving hill;
At noontide they flow
Through the woods below
And the meadows of asphodel;
And at night they sleep
In the rocking deep
Beneath the Ortygian shore,
Like spirits that lie
In the azure sky,
When they love but live no more.

P. B. Shelley

213. *To a Skylark*

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!—
Bird thou never wert—
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight:

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is over-
flowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower;

BOOK FIVE

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the
view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged
thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass, .
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground.

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

P. B. Shelley

BOOK FIVE

214. *Ode to the West Wind*

O wild west wind, thou breath of autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow
Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:
Wild spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!

Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,
Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: oh, hear!

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,
Beside a pumice isle in Baïæ's bay,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet the sense faints picturing them; thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh, hear!

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share
The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable; if even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skyey speed
Scarce seemed a vision, I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud.
I fall upon the thorns of life. I bleed.
A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own?
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one;
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth

BOOK FIVE

Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind;
Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy. O wind,
If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

P. B. Shelley

215. *Adonais*

An elegy on the death of John Keats

I weep for Adonais—he is dead.
O, weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head.
And thou, sad hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow. Say “With me
Died Adonais; till the future dares
Forget the past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity”.

Where wert thou, mighty mother, when he lay,
When thy son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness? Where was lorn Urania
When Adonais died? With veiled eyes,
'Mid listening echoes, in her paradise
She sate, while one, with soft enamoured breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies
With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of death.

O, weep for Adonais—he is dead.
Wake, melancholy mother, wake and weep.
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep,
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone where all things wise and fair
Descend. Oh, dream not that the amorous deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Most musical of mourners, weep again.
Lament anew, Urania. He died
Who was the sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide
Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite
Of lust and blood; he went unterrified
Into the gulf of death; but his clear sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth, the third among the sons of light.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew.
Not all to that bright station dared to climb;
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time
In which suns perished; others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road
Which leads, through toil and hate, to fame's serene
abode.

But now thy youngest, dearest one has perished,
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished
And fed with true love tears, instead of dew;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew.
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom, whose petals, nipped before they blew,
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;
The broken lily lies; the storm is overpast.

To that high capital where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay
He came, and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal. Come away;
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day

BOOK FIVE

Is yet his fitting charnel-roof; while still
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay.
Awake him not; surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

He will awake no more, oh, never more.
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace
The shadow of white death, and at the door
Invisible corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place.
The eternal hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface
So fair a prey, till darkness and the law
Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw.

O, weep for Adonais. The quick dreams,
The passion-wingèd ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not,—
Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,—
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn
their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home again.

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries:
“ Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some dream has loosened from his brain.”
Lost angel of a ruined paradise,
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs as if embalming them;
Another clipped her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

Another splendour on his mouth alit,
That mouth whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music; the damp death
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapour, which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed to its
eclipse.

And others came . . . desires and adorations,
Wingèd persuasions and veiled destinies,
Splendours, and glooms, and glimmering incarnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight phantasies;
And sorrow, with her family of sighs,
And pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp; the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

All he had loved, and moulded into thought,
From shape, and hue, and odour, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watchtower, and, her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,

BOOK FIVE

Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

Lost echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds; a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

Grief made the young spring wild, and she threw down
Her kindling buds, as if she autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
For whom should she have waked the sullen year?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou, Adonais; wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odour, to sighing ruth.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain.
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee. The curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year;
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;
The ants, the bees, the swallows, reappear;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead seasons' bier;
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere;
And the green lizard and the golden snake
Like unimprisoned flames out of their trance awake.

Through wood and stream and field and hill and ocean
A quickening life from the earth's heart has burst
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world when first
God dawned on chaos; in its stream immersed
The lamps of heaven flash with a softer light;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst;
Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's delight
The beauty and the joy of their renewed might.

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit tender
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath;
Naught we know dies. Shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning? The intense atom glows
A moment; then is quenched in a most cold repose.

Alas that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal. Woe is me!
Whence are we? And why are we? Of what scene
The actors or spectators? Great and mean

BOOK FIVE

Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.

As long as skies are blue and fields are green
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow.

He will awake no more, oh, never more.
"Wake thou," cried misery "childless mother, rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's core,
A wound more fierce than his with tears and sighs."
And all the dreams that watched Urania's eyes,
And all the echoes whom their sister's song
Had held in holy silence, cried "Arise!"
Swift as a thought by the snake memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading splendour sprung.

She rose like an autumnal night, that springs
Out of the east, and follows wild and drear
The golden day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Had left the earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so wrapped Urania;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

Out of her secret paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,
And human hearts, which to her aery tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell:
And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more sharp than
they
Rent the soft form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

In the death chamber for a moment death,
Shamed by the presence of that living might,
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.
"Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!" cried Urania: her distress
Roused death: death rose and smiled, and met her vain
caress.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais. I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art.
But I am chained to time, and cannot thence depart.

"Oh gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh where was then
Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;
The vultures, to the conqueror's banner true,
Who feed where desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion;—how they fled,

BOOK FIVE

When like Apollo, from his golden bow,
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped
And smiled! The spoilers tempt no second blow;
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

“The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn; .
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again;
So is it in the world of living men.
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven; and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit’s awful night.”

Thus ceased she; and the mountain shepherds came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;
The pilgrim of eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

Midst others of less note came one frail form,
A phantom among men; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on nature’s naked loveliness,
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o’er the world’s wilderness;
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

A pardlike spirit beautiful and swift;
A love in desolation masked; a power
Girt round with weakness;—it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour;
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow; even whilst we speak
Is it not broken? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the heart may
break.

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart,—
Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears; well knew that gentle band
Who in another's fate now wept his own;
As in the accents of an unknown land
He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned
The stranger's mien, and murmured: "Who art
thou?"

He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's: oh, that it should
be so.

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?

BOOK FIVE

If it be he, who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed one
Let me not vex with inharmonious sighs
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

Our Adonais has drunk poison. Oh,
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself disown:
It felt, yet could escape the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame;
Live; fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name.
But be thyself, and know thyself to be.
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow.
Remorse and self-contempt shall cling to thee;
Hot shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt—as now.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream below;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now.
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Peace, peace! He is not dead; he doth not sleep;
He hath awakened from the dream of life.
'Tis we who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings; we decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight
Can touch him not and torture not again.
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

He lives; he wakes. 'Tis death is dead, not he.
Mourn not for Adonais. Thou young dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone.
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan.
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair.

He is made one with nature. There is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,

BOOK FIVE

Spreading itself where'er that power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never wearied love;
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely; he doth bear
His part, while the one spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing the unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the heaven's light.

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought,
Far in the unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved:
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And many more, whose names on earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
"Thou art become as one of us" they cry;
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid an heaven of song.
Assume thy wingèd throne, thou vesper of our throng".

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh come forth,
Fond wretch, and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous earth;
As from a centre dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Sate the void circumference; then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night;
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the
brink.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
O, not of him, but of our joy: 'tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
For such as he can lend; they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey.
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

Go thou to Rome, at once the paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And, where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds and fragrant copses dress
The bones of desolation's nakedness,

BOOK FIVE

Pass, till the spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

And gray walls moulder round, on which dull time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in heaven's smile their camp of death,
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each; and if the seal is set
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou. Too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

The one remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity,
Until death tramples it to fragments. Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek;
Follow where all is fled. Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my heart?
Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart.
A light is passed from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles; the low wind whispers near—
'Tis Adonais calls; oh, hasten thither;
No more let life divide what death can join together.

That light whose smile kindles the universe,
That beauty in which all things work and move,
That benediction which the eclipsing curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining love
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven;
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the eternal are.

P. B. Shelley

BOOK FIVE

216. *Ozymandias*

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair'.
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away".

P. B. Shelley

217. *Ode on a Grecian Urn*

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair.

Ah, happy, happy boughs, that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love, more happy, happy love,
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands dressed?
What little town by river or sea-shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul, to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

BOOK FIVE

O Attic shape! fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity. Cold pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know".

John Keats

218. *Ode to Autumn*

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease;
For summer has o'erbrimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spare the next swath and all its twined flowers;
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Where are the songs of spring? Ay, where are they?

Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river salallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing, and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

John Keats

219. *Ode to a Nightingale*

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk;
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-wingèd dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm south,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,

BOOK FIVE

With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth!
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy.
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain,
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird;
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self.
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fabled to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music; do I wake or sleep?

John Keats

220. *On first looking into Chapman's Homer*

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold
 And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
 Round many western islands have I been
 Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
 Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
 That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne;
 Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
 Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold.
 Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
 When a new planet swims into his ken;
 Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
 He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
 Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
 Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

John Keats

221. *When I have fears that I may cease to be*

When I have fears that I may cease to be
 Before my pen has gleamed my teeming brain,
 Before high-pilèd books, in charact'ry
 Hold like rich garners the full-ripened grain;
 When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
 Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
 And think that I may never live to trace
 Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance;
 And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,
 That I shall never look upon thee more,
 Never have relish in the faery power
 Of unreflecting love, then on the shore
 Of the wide world I stand alone, and think,
 Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

John Keats

THE POET'S PROGRESS

222. *La Belle Dame sans Merci*

" O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

" O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woebegone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

" I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too."

" I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful, a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild;

" I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan;

" I set her on my pacing steed
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song;

" She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said
' I love thee true ';

BOOK FIVE

“ She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept, and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

“ And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dreamed—Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dreamt
On the cold hill side.

“ I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death pale were they all;
They cried ‘ La belle dame sans merci
Thee hath in thrall.’

“ I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill’s side.

“ And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake
And no birds sing. . . .”

John Keats

THE POET'S PROGRESS

223. *Wherefore, unlaurelled boy*

Wherefore, unlaurelled boy,
Whom the contemptuous muse will not inspire,
With a sad kind of joy
Still sing'st thou to thy solitary lyre?

The melancholy winds
Pour through unnumbered reeds their idle woes;
And every naiad finds
A stream to weep her sorrow as it flows.

Her sighs unto the air
The wood-maid's native oak doth broadly tell,
And Echo's fond despair
Intelligible rocks resyllable.

Wherefore, then, should not I,
Albeit no haughty muse my heart inspire,
Fated of grief to die,
Impart it to a solitary lyre?

George Darley

224. *Lines from "Nepenthe"*

O blest unfabled incense tree
That burns in glorious Araby,
With red scent chalicing the air,
Till earth-life grow Elysian there.

Half buried to her flaming breast
In this bright tree she makes her nest,
Hundred-sunned Phoenix, when she must
Crumble at length to hoary dust:

Her gorgeous deathbed; her rich pyre
Burnt up with aromatic fire;
Her urn, sight high from spoiler men;
Her birthplace when self-born again!

BOOK FIVE

The mountainless green wilds among
Here ends she her unechoing song;
With amber tears and odorous sighs
Mourned by the desert where she lies.

George Darley

225. *To a Waterfowl*

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far through their rosy depths dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and smile
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,
The desert and illimitable air
Lone wandering; but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned
At that far height the cold thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not weary to the welcome land
Though the dark night is near.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend
Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone; the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who from zone to zone
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight
In the long way that I must tread alone
Will lead my steps aright.

W. C. Bryant

226. *The Indian Girl's Lament*

An Indian girl was sitting where
Her lover, slain in battle, slept;
Her maiden veil (her own black hair)
Came down o'er eyes that wept;
And wildly in her woodland tongue
This sad and simple lay she sung:—

“ I've pulled away the shrubs that grew
Too close above thy sleeping head,
And broke the forest boughs that threw
Their shadows o'er thy bed,
That, shining from the sweet southwest,
The sunbeams might rejoice thy rest.

BOOK FIVE

" It was a weary, weary road
That led thee to the pleasant coast,
Where thou, in his serene abode,
Hast met thy father's ghost;
Where everlasting autumn lies
On yellow woods and sunny skies.

" 'Twas I the broidered mocsen made
That shod thee for that distant land;
'Twas I thy bow and arrows laid
Beside thy still cold hand,
Thy bow in many a battle bent,
Thy arrows never vainly spent.

" With wampum belts I crossed thy breast,
And wrapped thee in the bison's hide,
And laid the food that pleased thee best
In plenty by thy side;
And decked thee bravely, as became
A warrior of illustrious name.

" Thou'rt happy now, for thou hast passed
The long dark journey of the grave,
And in the land of light at last
Hast joined the good and brave,
Amid the flushed and balmy air
The bravest and the loveliest there.

" Yet oft to thine own Indian maid,
Even there, thy thoughts will earthward stray,
To her who sits where thou wert laid,
And weeps the hours away,
Yet almost can her grief forget
To think that thou dost love her yet.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

“ And thou, by one of those still lakes,
That in a shining cluster lie,
On which the south wind scarcely breaks
The image of the sky,
A bower for thee and me hast made
Beneath the many-coloured shade.

“ And thou dost wait and watch to meet
My spirit sent to join the blest,
And, wondering what detains my feet
From the bright land of rest,
Dost seem in every sound to hear
The rustling of my footsteps near ”.

W. C. Bryant

227. *Silence*

There is a silence where hath been no sound;
There is a silence where no sound may be;
In the cold grave, under the deep, deep sea,
Or in wide desert where no life is found;
Which hath been mute, and still must sleep profound:
No voice is hushed, no life treads silently,
But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,
That never spoke, over the idle ground.
But in green ruins, in the desolate walls
Of antique palaces, where man hath been,
Though the dun fox or wild hyæna calls,
And owls, that flit continually between,
Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,
There the true silence is, self-conscious and alone.

Thomas Hood

BOOK FIVE

228. *Ruth*

She stood breast-high amid the corn,
Clasped by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
Deeply ripened; such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell;
Which were blackest none could tell;
But long lashes veiled a light
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim;
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks.

Sure, I said, heaven did not mean
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean;
Lay thy sheaf adown and come;
Share my harvest and my home.

Thomas Hood

THE POET'S PROGRESS

229. *To Helen*

Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicéan barks of yore
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary way-worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece,
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo, in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand,
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are holy land.

Edgar Allan Poe

BOOK SIX

230. *The Armada*

A Fragment

Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise;
I tell of the thrice-famous deeds she wrought in ancient
 days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.

It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day
There came a gallant merchant ship full sail to Plymouth
 Bay;
Her crew had seen Castile's black fleet, beyond Aurigny's
 Isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many a
 mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial grace,
And the tall *Pinta*, till the noon, had held her close in
 chase.

Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the
 wall;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty
 hall;
Many a light fishing bark put out to pry along the coast;
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a
 post.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

With his white hair unbonneted the stout old sheriff
comes;
Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound
the drums;
His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample
space;
For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her
Grace.

And haughtily the trumpets peal and gaily dance the bells,
As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon swells.
Look how the Lion of the Sea lifts up his ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies
down.

So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed
Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Cæsar's eagle
shield.

So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to
bay,

And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely
hunters lay.

Ho! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight: ho! scatter
flowers, fair maids;

Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute; ho! gallants, draw
your blades;

Thou sun, shine on her gloriously; ye breezes, waft her
wide;

Our glorious *Semper Eadem*, the banner of our pride.

The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's
massy fold;

The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll
of gold;

Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the purple sea;
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again
shall be.

BOOK SIX

From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to
Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-flame
spread;
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone; it shone on
Beachy Head.
Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern
shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling
points of fire,
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering
waves;
The rugged miners poured war from Mendip's sun-
less caves;
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the fiery
herald flew;
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers of
Beaulieu.
Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out in
Bristol town,
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on Clifton
Down.
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the
night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of blood-
red light.
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the deathlike silence
broke,
And with one start and with one cry the royal city woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answering fires;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling spires;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the voice
of fear,
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a louder
cheer;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of
hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down
each roaring street,
And broader still became the blaze, and louder still the
din,
As fast from every village round the horse came spurring
in;
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the warlike
errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires of
Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those bright
couriers forth;
High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started
for the north;
And on, and on, without a pause, untired they bounded
still;
All night from tower to tower they sprang; they sprang
from hill to hill;
Till the proud Peak unfurled the flag on Darwin's rocky
dales,
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills of
Wales,
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's
lonely height,
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest
of light,
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's stately
fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the boundless
plain;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln
sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of
Trent;

BOOK SIX

Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle.

Lord Macaulay

231. *The Battle of Naseby*

*By Obadiah Bind-their-kings-in-chains-and-their-nobles-
with-links-of-iron, serjeant in Ireton's regiment*

Oh! wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the North,
With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment all red?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous shout?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which ye tread?

Oh, evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sate in the high places, and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance and their cuirasses shine,
And the Man of Blood was there, with his long essenced hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the Rhine.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,

The General rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swelled into a shout,

Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,

The cry of battle rises along their charging line.
For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the Laws!

For Charles King of England, and Rupert of the Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his drums,

His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes,
close your ranks;

For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We are gone!

Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.

O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the right!

Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to the last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound; the centre hath given ground:

Hark! hark!—What means the trampling of horsemen on our rear?

Whose banner do I see, boys? 'Tis he, thank God! 'tis he, boys.

Bear up another minute: brave Oliver is here.

BOOK SIX

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the
dykes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the accursed,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple
Bar:
And he—he turns, he flies; shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on
war.

Ho! comrades, scour the plain; and, ere ye strip the
slain,
First give another stab to make your search secure;
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-
pieces and lockets,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts
were gay and bold,
When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans
to-day;
And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in the
rocks,
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven and
hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your
blades,
Your perfumed satin clothes, your catches and your
oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and
your spades?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Down, down, for ever down with the mitre and the crown,

With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon of the Pope;

There is woe in Oxford Halls; there is wail in Durham's Stalls:

The Jesuit smites his bosom; the Bishop rends his cope.

And she of the seven hills shall mourn her children's ills,

And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's sword;

And the kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they hear

What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses and the Word.

Lord Macaulay

232. *Are they not all ministering spirits?*

We see them not, we cannot hear

The music of their wing;

Yet know we that they sojourn near,

The angels of the spring.

They glide along this lovely ground

When the first violet grows;

Their graceful hands have just unbound

The zone of yonder rose.

I gather it for thy dear breast,

From stain and shadow free;

That which an angel's touch hath blest

Is meet, my love, for thee.

R. S. Hawker

BOOK SIX

233. *Dark Rosaleen*

O my dark Rosaleen,
Do not sigh, do not weep!
The priests are on the ocean green,
They march along the deep.
There's wine from the royal Pope,
Upon the ocean green;
And Spanish ale shall give you hope,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen,
Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,
Shall give you health, and help, and hope,
My dark Rosaleen!

Over hills, and through dales,
Have I roamed for your sake;
All yesterday I sailed with sails
On river and on lake.
The Erne, at its highest flood,
I dashed across unseen,
For there was lightning in my blood,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen,
O, there was lightning in my blood,
Red lightning lightened through my blood,
My dark Rosaleen!

All day long, in unrest,
To and fro, do I move.
The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The heart in my bosom faints
To think of you, my queen,
My life of life, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen,
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen!

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
Are my lot, night and noon,
'To see your bright face clouded so,
Like to the mournful moon.
But yet will I rear your throne
Again in golden sheen;
'Tis you shall reign, shall reign alone,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen,
'Tis you shall have the golden throne,
'Tis you shall reign, and reign alone,
My dark Rosaleen!

Over dews, over sands,
Will I fly, for your weal:
Your holy delicate white hands
Shall girdle me with steel.
At home, in your emerald bowers,
From morning's dawn till e'en,
You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,
My dark Rosaleen,
My fond Rosaleen,
You'll think of me through daylight hours,
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,
My dark Rosaleen!

BOOK SIX

I could scale the blue air,
I could plough the high hills,
O, I could kneel all night in prayer,
To heal your many ills.
And one beamy smile from you
Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
My dark Rosaleen,
My fond Rosaleen,
Would give me life and soul anew,
A second life, a soul anew,
My dark Rosaleen.

O, the Erne shall run red,
With redundance of blood,
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,
And flames wrap hill and wood,
And gun-peal and slogan-cry
Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen,
The judgment hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My dark Rosaleen.

J. C. Mangan

THE POET'S PROGRESS

234. *School and Schoolfellows* *Floreat Etona*

Twelve years ago I made a mock
Of filthy trades and traffics;
I wondered what they meant by stock;
I wrote delightful sapphics;
I knew the streets of Rome and Troy,
I supped with Fates and Furies,
Twelve years ago I was a boy,
A happy boy, at Drury's.

Twelve years ago!—how many a thought
Of faded pains and pleasures
Those whispered syllables have brought
From memory's hoarded treasures,
The fields, the farms, the bats, the books,
The glories and disgraces,
The voices of dear friends, the looks
Of old familiar faces.

Kind *Mater* smiles again to me,
As bright as when we parted;
I scan again the frank, the free,
Stout-limbed, and simple-hearted;
Pursuing every idle dream,
And shunning every warning;
With no hard work but Bovney stream,
No chill except Long Morning;

Now stopping Harry Vernon's ball,
That rattled like a rocket;
Now hearing Wentworth's "Fourteen all",
And striking for the pocket;
Now feasting on a cheese and fitch,
Now drinking from the pewter,
Now leaping over Chalvey ditch,
Now laughing at my tutor.

BOOK SIX

Where are my friends? I am alone;
No playmate shares my beaker:
Some lie beneath the churchyard stone,
And some—before the Speaker;
And some compose a tragedy,
And some compose a rondo;
And some draw sword for liberty,
And some draw pleas for John Doe.

Tom Mill was used to blacken eyes
Without the fear of sessions;
Charles Medlar loathed false quantities
As much as false professions.
Now Mill keeps order in the land,
A magistrate pedantic,
And Medlar's feet repose unscanned
Beneath the wide Atlantic.

Wild Nick, whose oaths made such a din,
Does Dr. Martext's duty;
And Mullion, with that monstrous chin,
Is married to a beauty;
And Darrell studies, week by week,
His Mant, and not his Manton;
And Ball, who was but poor in Greek,
Is very rich at Canton.

And I am eight-and-twenty now;
The world's cold chains have bound me;
And darker shades are on my brow,
And darker scenes around me;
In Parliament I fill my seat,
With many other noodles;
And lay my head in Jermyn Street,
And sip my hock at Boodle's.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

But often when the cares of life
Have sent my temples aching,
When visions haunt me of a wife,
When duns await my waking,
When Lady Jane is in a pet,
Or Hobby in a hurry,
When Captain Hazard wins a bet,
Or Beaulieu spoils a curry,

For hours and hours I think and talk
Of each remembered hobby;
I long to lounge in Poet's Walk,
To shiver in the Lobby;
I wish that I could run away
From House, and Court, and Levee,
Where bearded men appear to-day
Just Eton boys grown heavy;

That I could bask in childhood's sun,
And dance o'er childhood's roses,
And find huge wealth in one pound one,
Vast wit in broken noses,
And play Sir Giles in Datchet Lane,
And call the milk-maids houris;
That I could be a boy again,
A happy boy, at Drury's.

W. M. Praed

BOOK SIX

235. *The Shandon Bells*

With deep affection,
And recollection,
I often think of
 Those Shandon bells,
Whose sounds so wild would,
In the days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle
 Their magic spells.
On this I ponder
Where'er I wander,
And thus grow fonder,
 Sweet Cork, of thee;
With thy bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

I've heard bells chiming
Full many a clime in,
Tolling sublime in
 Cathedral shrine,
While at a glibe rate
Brass tongues would vibrate;
But all their music
 Spoke naught like thine;
For memory, dwelling
On each proud swelling
Of thy belfry knelling
 Its bold notes free,
Made the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

I've heard bells tolling
Old Adrian's Mole in,
Their thunder rolling
 From the Vatican,
And cymbals glorious
Swinging uproarious
In the gorgeous turrets
 Of Notre Dame;
But thy sounds were sweeter
Than the dome of Peter
Flings o'er the Tiber,
 Pealing solemnly;
O! the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

There's a bell in Moscow,
While on tower and kiosk O
In Saint Sophia
 The Turkman gets;
And loud in air
Calls men to prayer
From the tapering summit
 Of tall minarets.
Such empty phantom
I freely grant them;
But there is an anthem
 More dear to me;
'Tis the bells of Shandon
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

Francis Mahony

BOOK SIX

236. *A Musical Instrument*

What was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river:
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sate the great god Pan,
While turbidly flowed the river;
And hacked and hewed as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of a leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan
(How tall it stood in the river!),
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notched the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sate by the river.

"This is the way," laughed the great god Pan
(Laughed while he sate by the river)
"The only way, since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed."
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain,
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river.

E. B. Browning

237. *The Slave's Dream*

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his native land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand.
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
And fell into the sand.

BOOK SIX

And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds
Beside some hidden stream;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
Shouted of liberty;
And the blast of the desert cried aloud
With a voice so wild and free
That he started in his sleep and smiled
At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
Nor the burning heat of day;
For death had illumined the land of sleep,
And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away.

H. W. Longfellow

THE POET'S PROGRESS

238. *Sir Humphrey Gilbert*

Southward with fleet of ice
Sailed the corsair Death;
Wild and fast blew the blast;
And the east wind was his breath.

His lordly ships of ice
Glistened in the sun;
On each side, like pennons wide,
Flashing crystal streamlets run.

His sails of white sea mist
Dripped with silver rain;
But where he passed there were cast
Leaden shadows o'er the main.

Eastward from Campobello
Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed;
Three days or more seaward he bore;
Then, alas, the land-wind failed.

Alas, the land-wind failed,
And ice-cold grew the night,
And nevermore on sea or shore,
Should Sir Humphrey see the light.

He sat upon the deck;
The Book was in his hand;
"Do not fear; heaven is as near"
He said "by water as by land."

In the first watch of the night,
Without a signal's sound,
Out of the sea, mysteriously
The fleet of Death rose all around.

BOOK SIX

The moon and the evening star
Were hanging in the shrouds;
Every mast, as it passed,
Seemed to rake the passing clouds.

They grappled with their prize
At midnight black and cold;
As of a rock was the shock;
Heavily the ground swell rolled.

Southward through day and dark
They drift in close embrace,
With mist and rain o'er the open main;
Yet there seems no change of place.

Southward, for ever southward,
They drift through dark and day;
And like a dream, in the Gulf Stream
Sinking, vanish all away.

H. W. Longfellow

239. *The Chambered Nautilus*

This is the ship of pearl which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main;
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming
hair.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl.
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed.

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no
more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap forlorn.
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn.
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that
sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll;
Leave thy low-vaulted past;
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outworn shell by life's unresting sea.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

BOOK SIX

240. *Dedication poem*

Say not the poet dies.
Though in the dust he lies,
He cannot forfeit his melodious breath,
Unspurred by envious death.
Life drops the voiceless myriads from its roll;
Their fate he cannot share
Who in the enchanted air,
Sweet with the lingering strains that Echo stole,
Has left his dearer self, the music of his soul.

We o'er his turf may raise
Our notes of feeble praise,
And carve with pious care for after days
The stone with "Here he lies".
He for himself has built a nobler shrine,
Whose walls of stately rhyme
Roll back the tides of time,
While o'er their gates the gleaming tablets shine
That wear his name inwrought with many a gleaming line.

Call not our poet dead,
Though on his turf we tread.
Green is the wreath their brows so long have worn,
The minstrels of the morn,
Who, while the orient burned with newborn flame,
Caught that celestial fire,
And struck a nation's lyre.
These taught the western winds the poet's name;
Theirs the first opening buds, the maiden flowers of fame.

Count not our poet dead.
The stars shall watch his bed;
The rose of June its fragrant life renew
His blushing mould to strew;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And all the tuneful throats of summer swell
With trills as crystal-clear
As when he wooed the ear
Of the young muse that haunts each wooded dell
With songs of that rough land he loved so well.

He sleeps; he cannot die.
As evening's long-drawn sigh,
Lifting the rose-leaves on his peaceful mound,
Spreads all their sweets around,
So, laden with his song, the breezes blow
From where the rustling sedge
Frets our rude ocean's edge
To the smooth sea beyond the peaks of snow.
His soul the air enshrines, and leaves but dust below.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

241. *Stanzas from "The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám"*

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

"How sweet is mortal Sovranty!" think some:
Others, "How blest the Paradise to come!"
Ah, take the Cash in hand and waive the Rest;
Oh, the brave Music of a *distant* Drum!

Think, in this battered Caravanseraï
Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.

BOOK SIX

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshýd gloried and drank deep:
And Bahrám, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropped in its Lap from some once lovely Head.

Ah, my Belovèd, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and future Fears.
To-morrow? Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Seven Thousand Years.

Lo! some we loved, the loveliest and best
That Time and Fate of all their Vintage pressed,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to Rest.

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust unto Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End.

Oh, come with old Khayyám, and leave the Wise
To talk: one thing is certain, that Life flies;
One thing is certain, and the Rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same Door as in I went.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

With them the Seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with my own hand laboured it to grow:
And this was all the Harvest that I reaped—
“ I came like Water, and like Wind I go.”

Into this Universe, and *why* not knowing,
Nor *whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

But leave the Wise to wrangle, and with me
The Quarrel of the Universe let be:
And in some corner of the Hubbub couched,
Make Game of that which makes as much of Thee.

The Ball no Question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Right or Left as strikes the Player goes;
And He that tossed Thee down into the Field,
He knows about it all—*HE* knows—*HE* knows!

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

And that inverted Bowl we call The Sky,
Whereunder crawling cooped we live and die,
Lift not thy hands to *It* for help—for *It*
Rolls impotently on as Thou or I.

Oh, Thou, who didst with Pitfall and with Gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestination round
Enmesh me, and impute my Fall to Sin?

BOOK SIX

Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And who with Eden didst devise the Snake;
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of man
Is blackened, Man's Forgiveness give—and take!



Ah, Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

Edward Fitzgerald

242. *The Men of Old*

I know not that the men of old
Were better than men now,
Of heart more kind, of hand more bold,
Of more ingenuous brow:
I heed not those who pine for force
A ghost of Time to raise,
As if they thus could check the course
Of these appointed days.

Still it is true, and over true,
That I delight to close
This book of life self-wise and new,
And let my thoughts repose
On all that humble happiness
The world has since forgone,
The daylight of contentedness
That on those faces shone.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

With rights, though not too closely scanned,
 Enjoyed, as far as known,
With will by no reverse unmanned,
 With pulse of even tone,
They from to-day and from to-night
 Expected nothing more,
Than yesterday and yesternight
 Had proffered them before.

To them was life a simple art
 Of duties to be done,
A game where each man took his part,
 A race where all must run;
A battle whose great scheme and scope
 They little cared to know,
Content, as men at arms, to cope
 Each with his fronting foe.

Man now his virtue's diadem
 Puts on and proudly wears;
Great thoughts, great feelings, came to them,
 Like instincts, unawares:
Blending their souls' sublimest needs
 With tasks of every day,
They went about their gravest deeds
 As noble boys at play.

And what if nature's fearful wound
 They did not probe and bare?
For that their spirits never swooned
 To watch the misery there,
For that their love but flowed more fast,
 Their charities more free,
Not conscious what mere drops they cast
 Into the evil sea.

BOOK SIX

A man's best things are nearest him,
Lie close about his feet;
It is the distant and the dim
That we are sick to greet:
For flowers that grow our hands beneath
We struggle and aspire;
Our hearts must die, except they breathe
The air of fresh desire.

Yet, brothers, who up reason's hill
Advance with hopeful cheer,
O loiter not; those heights are chill,
As chill as they are clear;
And still restrain your haughty gaze,
The loftier that ye go,
Remembering distance leaves a haze
On all that lies below.

Lord Houghton

243. *The Lady of Shalott*

PART I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And through the field the road runs by
To many-towered Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Through the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river

Flowing down to Camelot.

Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veiled,
Slide the heavy barges trailed
By slow horses; and unhailed
The shallop flitteth silken-sailed

Skimming down to Camelot:

But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly

Down to towered Camelot:

And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.

BOOK SIX

She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving through a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot:
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
Goes by to towered Camelot;
And sometimes through the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often through the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights,
And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
"I am half sick of shadows" said
The Lady of Shalott.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves;
The sun came dazzling through the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A red-cross knight for ever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazoned baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle-leather;
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often through the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed;
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot,

BOOK SIX

From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror;
" Tirra lirra " by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces through the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror cracked from side to side;
" The curse is come upon me " cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over towered Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse,
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance
With a glassy countenance,
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right,
The leaves upon her falling light,
Through the noises of the night
 She floated down to Camelot:
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,
 Turned to towered Camelot;
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
 Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they crossed themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot:

BOOK SIX

But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said " She has a lovely face;
God in His mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott ".

Lord Tennyson

244. *Choric Song from The Lotos- Eaters "*

There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful
skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And through the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

Why are we weighed upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown:
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings—
" There is no joy but calm ";
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Lo, in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is wooed from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steeped at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo, sweetened with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labour be?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence; ripen, fall, and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death or dreamful ease.

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream;
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;

BOOK SIX

To hear each other's whispered speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;
To muse and brood, and live again in memory
With those old faces of our infancy
Heaped over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass.

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears: but all hath suffered change;
For surely now our household hearths are cold:
Our sons inherit us: our looks are strange:
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle?
Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile:
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There *is* confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labour unto aged breath,
Sore task to hearts worn out with many wars
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

But, propped on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
With half-dropped eyelids still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly

THE POET'S PROGRESS

His waters from the purple hill,
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave through the thick-twined vine,
To watch the emerald-coloured water falling
Through many a woven acanthus-wreath divine.
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretched out beneath the pine,

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak:
The Lotos blows by every winding creek:
All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone:
Through every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-dust
is blown.

We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Rolled to starboard, rolled to larboard, when the surge
was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains
in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurled
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly
curled

Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming
world:

Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps
and fiery sands,

Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships,
and praying hands.

But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful
song

Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning though the words are strong;

BOOK SIX

Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whispered,—
down in hell

Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and
oar;

O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

Lord Tennyson

245. *You ask me why*

You ask me why, though ill at ease,
Within this region I subsist,
Whose spirits falter in the mist,
And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till,
That sober-suited Freedom chose,
The land where, girt with friends or foes,
A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,
A land of old and just renown,
Where Freedom slowly broadens down,
From precedent to precedent;

Where faction seldom gathers head,
But, by degrees to fullness wrought,
The strength of some diffusive thought
Hath time and space to work and spread.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Should banded unions persecute
Opinion, and induce a time
When single thought is civil crime,
And individual freedom mute;

Though Power should make from land to land
The name of Britain trebly great—
Though every channel of the State
Should fill and choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth,
Wild wind. I seek a warmer sky,
And I will see before I die
The palms and temples of the South.

Lord Tennyson

246. *Lines from "Locksley Hall"*

For I dipped into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the vision of the world, and the wonders that would
be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic
sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly
bales;

Heard the heavens filled with shouting, and there rained
a ghastly dew,
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central
blue;

BOOK SIX

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south wind
rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging through the
thunderstorm;

Till the war drum throbbed no longer, and the battle
flags were furled,
In the Parliament of Man, the federation of the world.

Lord Tennyson

247. *A Farewell*

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver;
No more by thee my steps shall be
For ever and for ever.

Flow, swiftly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet then a river;
No where by thee my steps shall be
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,
And here thine aspen shiver;
And here by thee will hum the bee
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver;
But not by thee my steps shall be
For ever and for ever.

Lord Tennyson

THE POET'S PROGRESS

248. *Break, break, break*

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O sea.
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play.
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay.

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still.

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O sea.
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

Lord Tennyson

249. *Sir Galahad*

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splintered spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel:

BOOK SIX

They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall.
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall:
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bowed in crypt and shrine:
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair through faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
I hear a voice, but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision; blood of God!
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Through dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height;
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touched, are turned to finest air.

BOOK SIX

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And through the mountain walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on; the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-armed I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

Lord Tennyson

250. *Songs from "The Princess"*

i. The splendour falls on castle walls

The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear, how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going;
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of elfland faintly blowing;
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying;
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

ii. Now sleeps the crimson petal

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font:
The fire-fly wakens: waken thou with me.

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now liës the earth all Danaë to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake:
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into ~~my~~ bosom and be lost in me.

iii. Come down, O maid

Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height:
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang).
If, height and cold, the splendour of the hills?
But cease to move so near the heavens, and cease
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire;

BOOK SIX

And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come thou down
And find him; by the happy threshold, he,
Or hand in hand with plenty in the maize,
Or red with spirted purple of the vats,
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to walk
With death and morning on the silver horns;
Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
Nor find him dropped upon the firths of ice,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors:
But follow; let the torrent dance thee down
To find him in the valley; let the wild
Lean-headed eagles yelp alone, and leave
The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill
Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,
That like a broken purpose waste in air:
So waste not thou; but come; for all the vales
Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
Arise to thee; the children call, and I
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound;
Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet;
Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawn,
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

Lord Tennyson

251. *Stanzas from "In Memoriam"*

i. The wish that, of the living whole

The wish that, of the living whole,
 No life may fail beyond the grave,
 Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?
Are God and Nature then at strife,
 That Nature lends such evil dreams?
 So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life;
That I, considering everywhere
 Her secret meaning in her deeds,
 And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,
I falter where I firmly trod,
 And falling with my weight of cares
 Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope through darkness up to God,
I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
 And gather dust and chaff, and call
 To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

ii. Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
 The flying cloud, the frosty light:
 The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.
Ring out the old, ring in the new,
 Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
 The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

BOOK SIX

Ring out the grief, that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

Lord Tennyson

252. *Come into the garden, Maud*

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown;
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the roses blown.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine stirred
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
"For ever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clashed in the hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

BOOK SIX

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake,
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sighed for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries "She is near, she is near";
And the white rose weeps "She is late";
The larkspur listens "I hear, I hear";
And the lily whispers "I wait".

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

Lord Tennyson

253. *The Brook*

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever

I chatter over stony ways
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

BOOK SIX

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots;
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

Lord Tennyson

THE POET'S PROGRESS

254. *The Revenge*

A Ballad of the Fleet

I

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a fluttered bird, came flying from
far away:

"Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-
three!"

Then swore Sir Thomas Howard "'Fore God, I am
no coward;

But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
And the half of my men are sick. I must fly, but follow
quick.

We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-
three?"

II

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville "I know you are no
coward;

You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.

But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore.

I should count myself the coward if I left them, my Lord
Howard,

To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain".

III

So Lord Howard passed away with five ships of war that
day,

Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven;

But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the land

Very carefully and slow,

Men of Bideford in Devon,

And we laid them on the ballast down below;

BOOK SIX

For we brought them all aboard,
And they blessed him in their pain that they were not
left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the
Lord.

IV

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to
fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came
in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather
bow.
" Shall we fight, or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die.
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be
set."
And Sir Richard said again " We be all good English
men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the
devil,
For I never turned my back upon Don or devil yet ".,

Sir Richard spoke and he laughed, and we roared a
hurrah, and so
The little *Revenge* ran on sheer into the heart of the
foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick
below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left
were seen,
And the little *Revenge* ran on through the long sea-lane
between.

THE POETS PROGRESS

VI

Thousands of their soldiers looked down from their
 decks and laughed,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little
 craft
Running on and on, till delayed
By their mountain-like *San Philip*, that, of fifteen
 hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning
 tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stayed.

VII

And while now the great *San Philip* hung above us like
 a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard
 lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII

But anon the great *San Philip*, she bethought herself and
 went,
Having that within her womb that had left her ill
 content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us
 hand to hand;
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and mus-
 queteers,
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes
 his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.

BOOK SIX

IX

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over
the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the
fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built
galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-
thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with
her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk, and many were shattered, and so
could fight us no more—
God of battles, was ever battle like this in the world
before?

For he said "Fight on. Fight on".
Though his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the short summer
night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be dressed he had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the
head;
And he said "Fight on. Fight on".

XI

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far
over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us
all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for they feared that
we still could sting,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

So they watched what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maimed for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them
stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder
was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side.
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride
“ We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again.
We have won great glory, my men.
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner; sink her; split her
in twain.
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain ”.

XII

And the Gunner said “ Ay, ay ”. But the seamen made
reply
“ We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let
us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow ”.
And the lion lay there dying, and they yielded to the foe.

XIII

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him
then,

BOOK SIX

Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught
at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly
foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried
"I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man
and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do;
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die".
And he fell upon their decks and he died.

XIV

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant
and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and his English
few.
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew.
But they sank his body with honour down into the deep,
And they manned the *Revenge* with a swarthier alien crew,
And away she sailed with her loss and longed for her own;
When a wind from the lands they had ruined awoke
from sleep,
And the water began to heave, and the weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake
grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their
masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shattered
navy of Spain,
And the little *Revenge* herself went down by the island
crag,
To be lost evermore in the main.

Lord Tennyson

THE POET'S PROGRESS

255. *Pippa's Song*

The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven—
All's right with the world!

Robert Browning

256. *Home-thoughts, from abroad*

Oh, to be in England now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England sees, some morning,
unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge;
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture.
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower.
Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

Robert Browning

BOOK SIX

257. *Home-thoughts, from the sea*

Nobly, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the north-west
died away;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz
Bay;
Bluish mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay:
In the dimmest north-east distance dawned Gibraltar
grand and gray;
“Here and here did England help me: how can I help
England?” say
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise
and pray,
While Jove’s planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

Robert Browning

258. *The Laboratory*

Ancien Régime

Now that I, tying thy glass mask tightly,
May gaze through these faint smokes curling whitely,
As thou pliest thy trade in this devil’s smithy,
Which is the poison to poison her, prithee?

He is with her, and they know that I know
Where they are, what they do; they believe my tears
flow,
While they laugh, laugh at me, at me fled to the drear
Empty church, to pray God in, for them! I am here.

Grind away; moisten and mash up thy paste;
Pound at thy powder. I am not in haste.
Better sit thus and observe thy strange things,
Than go where men wait me, and dance at the King’s.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

That in the mortar—you call it a gum?
Ah, the brave tree whence such gold oozings come!
And yonder soft phial, the exquisite blue,
Sure to taste sweetly—is that poison too?

Had I but all of them, thee and thy treasures,
What a wild crowd of invisible pleasures!
To carry pure death in an earring, a casket,
A signet, a fan mount, a filigree basket!

Soon, at the King's, a mere lozenge to give,
And Pauline should have just thirty minutes to live;
But to light a pastille, and Elise, with her head
And her breast and her arms and her hands, should drop
dead.

Quick—is it finished? The colour's too grim.
Why not soft like the phial's, enticing and dim?
Let it brighten her drink, let her turn it and stir,
And try it and taste, ere she fix and prefer.

What a drop! She's not little, no minion like me.
That's why she ensnared him. This never will free
The soul from those masculine eyes, say "No"
To that pulse's magnificent come-and-go.

For only last night, as they whispered, I brought
My own eyes to bear on her so, that I thought
Could I keep them one half minute fixed, she would fall
Shrivelled. She fell not. Yet this does it all.

Not that I bid you spare her the pain;
Let death be felt, and the proof remain;
Brand, burn up, bite into its grace—
He is sure to remember her dying face.

BOOK SIX

Is it done? Take my mask off. Nay, be not morose.
It kills her, and this prevents seeing it close,
The delicate droplet, my whole fortune's fee,
If it hurts her, beside, can it ever hurt me?

Now, take all my jewels; gorge gold to your fill;
You may kiss me, old man, on my mouth if you will.
But brush this dust off me, lest horror it brings
Ere I know it. Next moment I dance at the King's!

Robert Browning

259. *The Patriot*

An old story

It was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad;
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway;
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago on this very day.

The air broke into a mist with bells;
The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries;
Had I said "Good folk, mere noise repels;
But give me your sun from yonder skies!"
They had answered "And afterward, what else?"

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun,
To give it my loving friends to keep;
Nought man could do have I left undone;
And you see my harvest, what I reap
This very day, now a year is run.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

There's nobody on the house-tops now—
Just a palsied few at the windows set:
For the best of the sight is, all allow,
At the Shambles' Gate; or better yet,
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go.
In triumphs, people have dropped down dead;
"Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
Me?" God might question. Now, instead,
'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so.

Robert Browning

260. Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came

My first thought was, he lied in every word,
That hoary cripple, with malicious eye
Askance to watch the working of his lie
On mine, and mouth scarce able to afford
Suppression of the glee that pursed and scored
Its edge, at one more victim gained thereby.

What else should he be set for with his staff?
What, save to waylay with his lies, ensnare
All travellers who might find him posted there,
And ask the road? I guessed what skull-like laugh
Would break, what crutch 'gin write my epitaph
For pastime in the dusty thoroughfare,

BOOK SIX

If at his counsel I should turn aside
 Into that ominous tract which, all agree,
 Hides the Dark Tower. Yet acquiescingly
I did turn as he pointed: neither pride
Nor hope rekindling at the end desried,
 So much as gladness that some end might be.

For, what with my whole world-wide wandering,
 What with my search drawn out through years, my
 hope
 Dwindled into a ghost not fit to cope
With that obstreperous joy success would bring,
I hardly tried now to rebuke the spring
 My heart made, finding failure in its scope.

As when a sick man very near to death
 Seems dead indeed, and feels begin and end
 The tears, and takes the farewell of each friend,
And hears one bid the other go, draw breath
Freelier outside ("since all is o'er" he saith
 "And the blow fallen no grieving can amend"),

While some discuss if near the other graves
 Be room enough for this, and when a day
 Suits best for carrying the corpse away,
With care about the banners, scarves, and staves;
And still the man hears all, and only craves
 He may not shame such tender love and stay:

Thus, I had so long suffered in the quest,
 Heard failure prophesied so often, been writ
 So many times among "The Band",—to wit
The knights who to the Dark Tower's search addressed
Their steps—that just to fail as they seemed best,
 And all the doubt was now, should I be fit?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

So, quiet as despair, I turned from him,
That hateful cripple, out of his highway
Into the path he pointed. All the day
Had been a dreary one at best, and dim
Was settling to its close, yet shot one grim
Red leer to see the plain catch its estray.

For mark, no sooner was I fairly found
Pledged to the plain, after a pace or two,
Than, pausing to throw backward a last view
O'er the safe road, 'twas gone; gray plain all round,
Nothing but plain to the horizon's bound.
I might go on: nought else remained to do.

So, on I went. I think I never saw
Such starved ignoble nature; nothing throve:
For flowers—as well expect a cedar grove.
But cockle, spurge, according to their law
Might propagate their kind, with none to awe,
You'd think; a burr had been a treasure-trove.

No! penury, inertness, and grimace,
In some strange sort, were the land's portion. "See
Or shut your eyes" said Nature peevishly.
"It nothing skills: I cannot help my case;
'Tis the Last Judgment's fire must cure this place,
Calcine its clods, and set my prisoners free."

If there pushed any ragged thistle-stalk
Above its mates, the head was chopped: the bents
Were jealous else. What made those holes and rents
In the dock's harsh swarth leaves, bruised as to baulk
All hope of greenness? 'Tis a brute must walk
Pashing their life out, with a brute's intents.

BOOK SIX

As for the grass, it grew as scant as hair
In leprosy: thin dry blades pricked the mud
Which underneath looked kneaded up with blood.
One stiff blind horse, his every bone a-stare,
Stood stupefied, however he came there:
Thrust out past service from the devil's stud!

Alive? He might be dead for all I know,
With that red, gaunt, and colloped neck a-strain,
And shut eyes underneath the rusty mane;
Seldom went such grotesqueness with such woe;
I never saw a brute I hated so;
He must be wicked to deserve such pain.

I shut my eyes and turned them on my heart.
As a man calls for wine before he fights
I asked one draught of earlier, happier sights,
Ere fitly I could hope to play my part.
Think first, fight afterwards—the soldier's art:
One taste of the old time sets all to rights.

Not it! I fancied Cuthbert's reddening face
Beneath its garniture of curly gold,
Dear fellow, till I almost felt him fold
An arm in mine to fix me to the place,
That way he used. Alas, one night's disgrace!
Out went my heart's new fire and left it cold.

Giles then, the soul of honour. There he stands
Frank as ten years ago when knighted first.
What honest man should dare (he said) he durst.
Good. But the scene shifts. Faugh! what hangman
hands
Pin to his breast a parchment? His own bands
Read it. Poor traitor, spit upon and curst!

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Better the present than a past like that;
Back therefore to my darkening path again.
No sound; no sight as far as eye could strain.
Will the night send a howlet or a bat?
I asked, when something on the dismal flat
Came to arrest my thoughts and change their train.

A sudden little river crossed my path
As unexpected as a serpent comes;
No sluggish tide congenial to the glooms,
This, as it frothed by, might have been a bath
For the fiend's glowing hoof, to see the wrath
Of its black eddy bespate with flakes and spumes.

So petty, yet so spiteful! All along
Low scrubby alders kneeled down over it;
Drenched willows flung them headlong in a fit
Of mute despair, a suicidal throng.
The river which had done them all the wrong,
Whate'er that was, rolled by, deterred no whit.

Which, while I forded—good saints, how I feared
To set my foot upon a dead man's cheek,
Each step, or feel the spear I thrust to seek
For hollows, tangled in his hair or beard!
It may have been a water-rat I speared,
But, ugh, it sounded like a baby's shriek.

Glad was I when I reached the other bank.
Now for a better country. Vain presage!
Who were the strugglers, what war did they wage,
Whose savage trample thus could pad the dank
Soil to a splash! Toads in a poisoned tank,
Or wild cats in a red-hot iron cage—

BOOK SIX

The fight must so have seemed in that fell cirque.
What penned them there, with all the plain to choose?
No footprint leading to that horrid mews,
None out of it. Mad brewage set to work
Their brains, no doubt, like galley-slaves the Turk
Pits for his pastime, Christians against Jews.

And more than that—a furlong on—why, there!
What bad use was that engine for, that wheel,
Or brake, not wheel—that harrow fit to reel
Men's bodies out like silk? With all the air
Of Tophet's tool, on earth left unaware,
Or brought to sharpen its rusty teeth of steel.

Then came a bit of stubbed ground, once a wood,
Next a marsh, it would seem, and now mere earth
Desperate and done with (so a fool finds mirth,
Makes a thing and then mars it, till his mood
Changes and off he goes); within a rood
Bog, clay, and rubble, sand and stark black dearth.

Now blotches rankling, coloured gay and grim;
Now patches where some leanness of the soil's
Broke into moss or substances like boils;
Then came some palsied oak, a cleft in him
Like a distorted mouth that splits its rim
Gaping at death, and dies while it recoils.

And just as far as ever from the end;
Nought in the distance but the evening; nought
To point my footsteps farther. At the thought
A great black bird, Apollyon's bosom friend,
Sailed past, nor beat his wide wing dragon-penned
That brushed my cap—perchance the guide I sought.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

For, looking up, aware I somehow grew,
 'Spite of the dusk, the plain had given place
 All round to mountains—with such name to grace
Mere ugly heights and heaps now stolen in view.
How thus they had surprised me. solve it you.
 How to get from them was no clearer case.

Yet half I seemed to recognize some trick
 Of mischief happened to me, God knows when—
 In a bad dream perhaps. Here ended, then,
Progress this way; when, in the very nick
Of giving up, one time more, came a click
 As when a trap shuts—you're inside the den!

Burningly it came on me all at once;
 This was the place; those two hills on the right,
 Crouched like two bulls locked horn in horn in fight;
While to the left a tall scalped mountain . . . Dunce,
Dotard, a-dozing at the very nonce,
 After a life spent training for the sight!

What in the midst lay but the Tower itself?
 The round squat turret, blind as the fool's heart;
 Built of brown stone; without a counterpart
In the whole world. The tempest's mocking elf
Points to the shipman thus the unseen shelf
 He strikes on, only when the timbers start.

Not see? Because of night, perhaps? Why, day
 Came back again for that. Before it left,
 The dying sunset kindled through a cleft;
The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay
Chin upon hand to see the game at bay;
 “Now stab and end the creature, to the heft,”

BOOK SIX

Not hear? When noise was everywhere; it tolled
Increasing like a bell. Names in my ears
Of all the lost adventurers my peers;
How such a one was strong, and such was bold,
And such was fortunate; yet each of old
Lost, lost. One moment knelled the woe of years.

There they stood, ranged along the hillsides, met
To view the last of me, a living frame
For one more picture. In a sheet of flame
I saw them, and I knew them all. And yet
Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,
And blew "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower
came"

Robert Browning

261. *A Grammarian's Funeral*

Shortly after the Revival of Learning in Europe

Let us begin and carry up this corpse,
Singing together.
Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar thorpes,
Each in its tether
Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,
Cared-for till cock-crow:
Look out if yonder be not day again
Rimming the rock-row.
That's the appropriate country; there, man's thought,
Rarer, intenser,
Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
Chafes in the censer.
Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and crop;
Seek we sepulture
On a tall mountain, citied to the top,
Crowded with culture!

THE POET'S PROGRESS

All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels;
Clouds overcome it;
No, yonder sparkle is the citadel's
Circling its summit.
Thither our path lies; wind we up the heights:
Wait ye the warning?
Our low life was the level's and the night's;
He's for the morning.
Step to a tune, square chests, erect each head,
'Ware the beholders!
This is our master, famous, calm, and dead,
Borne on our shoulders.

Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darkling thorpe and
croft,
Safe from the weather.
He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,
Singing together,
He was a man born with thy face and throat,
Lyric Apollo.
Long he lived nameless: how should spring take
note
Winter would follow?
Till lo, the little touch, and youth was gone.
Cramped and diminished,
Moaned he "New measures, other feet anon;
My dance is finished"?
No, that's the world's way: (keep the mountain-side,
Make for the city.)
He knew the signal, and stepped on with pride
Over men's pity;
Left play for work, and grappled with the world
Bent on escaping:
"What's in the scroll" quoth he "thou keepest
furled?
Show me their shaping,

BOOK SIX

Theirs, who most studied man, the bard and sage;
Give!"—So, he gowned him,
Straight got by heart that book to its last page:
Learned, we found him.
Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like lead,
Accents uncertain:
"Time to taste life," another would have said
"Up with the curtain".
This man said rather "Actual life comes next?
Patience a moment.
Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed text;
Still, there's the comment.
Let me know all. Prate not of most or least,
Painful or easy.
Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the feast,
Ay, nor feel queasy".
Oh, such a life as he resolved to live,
When he had learned it,
When he had gathered all books had to give;
Sooner, he spurned it.
Image the whole, then execute the parts;
Fancy the fabric
Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire from quartz,
Ere mortar dab brick!

(Here's the town-gate reached: there's the market-
place
Gaping before us.)
Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace
(Hearten our chorus!)
That before living he'd learn how to live—
No end to learning:
Earn the means first; God surely will contrive
Use for our earning.
Others mistrust and say "But time escapes:
Live now or never".

THE POET'S PROGRESS

He said "What's time? leave Now for dogs and
Man has Forever".

Back to his book then: deeper drooped his head
Calculus racked him:

Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead:
Tussis attacked him.

"Now, master, take a little rest!" Not he.
(Caution redoubled,

Step two a-breast, the way winds narrowly.)
Not a whit troubled,

Back to his studies, fresher than at first,
Fierce as a dragon

He (soul-hydroptic with a sacred thirst)
Sucked at the flagon.

Oh, if we draw a circle premature,
Heedless of far gain,

Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure,
Bad is our bargain.

Was it not great? did not he throw on God,
(He loves the burthen)—

God's task to make the heavenly period
Perfect the earthen?

Did not he magnify the mind, show clear
Just what it all meant?

He would not discount life, as fools do here,
Paid by instalment.

He ventured neck or nothing; heaven's success
Found, or earth's failure:

"Wilt thou trust death or not?" He answered
"Yes.

Hence with life's pale lure!"

That low man seeks a little thing to do,
Sees it and does it:

This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it.

BOOK SIX

That low man goes on adding one to one,
His hundred's soon hit:
This high man, aiming at a million,
Misses an unit.
That, has the world here; should he need the next,
Let the world mind him!
This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed
Seeking shall find him.
So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,
Ground he at grammar;
Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were rife:
While he could stammer
He settled *Hoti's* business—let it be!
Properly based *Oun*;
Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,
Dead from the waist down.
Well, here's the platform, here's the proper place:
Hail to your purlieus,
All ye highfliers of the feathered race,
Swallows and curlews.
Here's the top-peak; the multitude below
Live, for they can, there:
This man decided not to Live but Know.
Bury this man there?
Here—here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds form,
Lightnings are loosened,
Stars come and go. Let joy break with the storm,
Peace let the dew send.
Lofty designs must close in like effects:
Loftily lying,
Leave him, still loftier than the world suspects,
Living and dying.

Robert Browning

THE POET'S PROGRESS

262. *Prospice*

Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe,
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form?
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness, and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

Robert Browning

BOOK SIX

263. *The old Stoic*

Riches I hold in light esteem,
And love I laugh to scorn;
And lust of fame was but a dream
That vanished with the morn:

And if I pray, the only prayer
That moves my lips for me
Is "Leave the heart that now I bear,
And give me liberty".

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,
'Tis all that I implore;
In life and death a chainless soul
With courage to endure.

Emily Brontë

264. *Say not, The struggle naught availeth*

Say not, The struggle naught availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

A. H. Clough

265. *Young and old*

When all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
And round the world away;
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And ail the wheels run down;
Creep home, and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among;
God grant you find one face there,
You loved when all was young.

Charles Kingsley

BOOK SIX

266. *Ode to the North-east Wind*

Welcome, wild north-easter!
 Shame it is to see
 Odes to every zephyr;
 Ne'er a verse to thee.
 Welcome, black north-easter!
 O'er the German foam;
 O'er the Danish moorlands,
 From thy frozen home.
 Tired we are of summer,
 Tired of gaudy glare,
 Showers soft and steaming,
 Hot and breathless air.
 Tired of listless dreaming,
 Through the lazy day:
 Jovial wind of winter,
 Turn us out to play.
 Sweep the golden reed-beds;
 Crisp the lazy dyke;
 Hunger into madness
 Every plunging pike.
 Fill the lake with wild-fowl;
 Fill the marsh with snipe;
 While on dreary moorlands
 Lonely curlew pipe.
 Through the black fir-forest
 Thunder harsh and dry,
 Shattering down the snow-flakes
 Off the curdled sky.
 Hark! The brave north-easter!
 Breast-high lies the scent,
 On by holt and headland,
 Over heath and bent.
 Chimie, ye dappled darlings,
 Through the sleet and snow.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Who can over-ride you?
Let the horses go.
Chime, ye dappled darlings,
Down the roaring blast;
You shall see a fox die
Ere an hour be past.
Go; and rest to-morrow,
Hunting in your dreams,
While our skates are ringing
O'er the frozen streams.
Let the luscious south wind
Breathe in lovers' sighs,
While the lazy gallants
Bask in ladies' eyes.
What does he but soften
Heart alike and pen?
'Tis the hard gray weather
Breeds hard English men.
What's the soft south-wester?
'Tis the ladies' breeze,
Bringing home their true loves
Out of all the seas:
But the black north-easter,
Through the snow-storm hurled,
Drives our English hearts of oak
Seaward round the world.
Come, as came our fathers,
Heralded by thee,
Conquering from the eastward,
Lords by land and sea.
Come; and strong within us
Stir the Vikings' blood;
Bracing brain and sinew,
Blow, thou wind of God!

Charles Kingsley

BOOK SIX

267. *O Captain, my Captain*

O Captain, my Captain, our fearful trip is done;
The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought
is won,

The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and
daring,

But O heart! heart! heart!

O the bleeding drops of red!

Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain, my Captain, rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up; for you the flag is flung; for you the bugle
trills;

For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths; for you the
shores a-crowding;

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces
turning,

Here, Captain! dear father!

This arm beneath your head!

It is some dream that on the deck
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will;
The ship is anchored safe and sound, its voyage closed
and done;

From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object
won;

Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!

But I, with mournful tread,

Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

Walt Whitman

THE POET'S PROGRESS

268. *Quiet Work*

One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee,
One lesson which in every wind is blown,
One lesson of two duties kept at one
Though the loud world proclaim their enmity—
Of toil unsevered from tranquillity;
Of labour that in lasting fruit outgrows
Far noisier schemes; accomplished in repose,
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry.
Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's fitful uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy sleepless ministers move on,
Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting;
Still working; blaming still our vain turmoil;
Labourers that shall not fail when man is gone.

Matthew Arnold

269. *Shakespeare*

Others abide our question—thou art free.
We ask and ask—thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,
Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foiled searching of mortality;
And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-schooled, self-scanned, self-honoured, self-secure,
Didst tread on earth unguessed at.—Better so.
All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

Matthew Arnold

BOOK SIX

270. *Callicles' last song on Etna*

Through the black rushing smoke-bursts
Thick breaks the red flame;
All Etna heaves fiercely
Her forest-clothed frame.

Not here, O Apollo,
Are haunts meet for thee;
But where Helicon breaks down
In cliffs to the sea.

Where the moon-silvered inlets
Send far their light voice
Up the still vale of Thisbe,
O speed, and rejoice.

On the sward at the cliff top
Lie strewn the white flocks;
On the cliff side the pigeons
Roost deep in the rocks.

In the moonlight the shepherds,
Soft lulled by the rills,
Lie wrapped in their blankets
Asleep in the hills. . . .

What forms are these coming
So white through the gloom?
What garments out-glistening
The gold-flowered broom?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

What sweet-breathing presence
Out-perfumes the thyme?
What voices enrapture
The night's balmy prime?

'Tis Apollo comes leading
His choir, the Nine,
The leader is fairest,
But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows . . .
They stream up again.
What seeks on this mountain
The glorified train?

They bathe on this mountain
In the spring by their road,
Then on to Olympus,
Their endless abode.

Whose praise do they mention?
Of what is it told?
What will be for ever;
What was from of old.

First hymn they the Father
Of all things; and then,
The rest of immortals,
The action of men;

The day in his hotness,
The strife, with the palm;
The night in her silence;
The stars in their calm.

Matthew Arnold

BOOK SIX

271. *To Marguerite*

Yes: in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live alone.
The islands feel the enclasping flow.
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing;
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour;

O then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent.
Now round us spreads the watery plain;
O might our marges meet again.

Who ordered that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cooled?
Who renders vain their deep desire?—
A God, a God their severance ruled;
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.

Matthew Arnold

THE POET'S PROGRESS

272. *The Forsaken Merman*

Come, dear children, let us away:

Down and away below.

Now my brothers call from the bay;

Now the great winds shoreward blow;

Now the salt tides seaward flow;

Now the wild white horses play,

Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.

Children dear, let us away.

This way, this way.

Call her once before you go.

Call once yet,

In a voice that she will know:

"Margaret! Margaret!"

Children's voices should be dear

(Call once more) to a mothers' ear:

Children's voices, wild with pain—

Surely she will come again.

Call her once and come away;

This way, this way.

"Mother dear, we cannot stay.

The wild white horses foam and fret.

Margaret! Margaret!"

Come, dear children, come away down.

Call no more.

One last look at the white-walled town,

And the little gray church on the windy shore.

Then come down.

She will not come though you call all day.

Come away, come away.

BOOK SIX

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep; .
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam;
Where the salt weed sways in the stream;
Where the sea-beasts ranged all round
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea;
She said "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little gray church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, merman, here with thee."
I said "Go up, dear heart, through the waves,
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves;"
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.
Long prayers" I said "in the world they say.
Come" I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town.
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little gray church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small-leaded
panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
"Margaret, hst; come quick, we are here.
Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone.
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book.
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more.
Come away, come down, call no more.

Down, down, down,
Down to the depths of the sea.
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy;
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun."
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the shuttle falls from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.

BOOK SIX

She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare;
And anon there drops a tear
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden;
A long, long sigh
For the cold strange eyes of a little mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children;
Come children, come down;
The hoarse wind blows colder;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door:
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing "Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she;
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea".

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down;
Singing "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she;
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea".

Matthew Arnold

273. *Requiescat*

Strew on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew.
In quiet she reposes;
Ah, would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required;
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound;
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath;
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

Matthew Arnold

274. *The Scholar-Gipsy*

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the hill;
 Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes:
 No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
 Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
 Nor the cropped grasses shoot another head.
 But when the fields are still,
 And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
 And only the white sheep are sometimes seen
 Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanced green;
 Come, shepherd, and again begin the quest.

Here, where the reaper was at work of late,
 In this high field's dark corner, where he leaves
 His coat, his basket, and his earthen cruse,
 And in the sun all morning binds the sheaves,
 Then here, at noon, comes back his stores to use—
 Here will I sit and wait,
 While to my ear from uplands far away
 The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,
 With distant cries of reapers in the corn—
 All the live murmur of a summer's day.

Screened is this nook o'er the high, half-reaped field,
 And here till sundown, shepherd, will I be.
 Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep,
 And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see
 Pale blue convolvulus in tendrils creep:
 And air-swept lindens yield
 Their scent, and rustle down their perfumed showers
 Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,
 And bower me from the August sun with shade;
 And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book.
Come, let me read the oft-read tale again:
The story of that Oxford scholar poor,
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive brain,
Who, tired of knocking at preferment's door,
One summer morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the gipsy lore,
And roamed the world with that wild brother-
hood,
And came, as most men deemed, to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more.

But once, years after, in the country lanes,
Two scholars, whom at college erst he knew,
Met him, and of his way of life inquired.
Whereat he answered that the gipsy crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they desired
The workings of men's brains;
And they can bind them to what thoughts they
will:
"And I" he said "the secret of their art,
When fully learned, will to the world impart:
But it needs heaven-sent moments for this skill".

This said, he left them, and returned no more.
But rumours hung about the country-side,
That the lost scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of gray,
The same the gipsies wore.
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring;
At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle-bench the smock-frocked
boors
Had found him seated at their entering,

BOOK SIX

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he would fly:
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, wanderer, on thy trace;
And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks
I ask if thou hast passed their quiet place;
Or in my boat I lie
Moored to the cool bank in the summer heats,
'Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,
And watch the warm green-muffled Cumnor hills,
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retirèd ground.
Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer nights, have met
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bablock-hithe,
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,
As the slow punt swings round:
And leaning backwards in a pensive dream,
And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
Plucked in shy fields and distant Wychwood
bowers,
And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream;

And then they land, and thou art seen no more.
Maidens who from the distant hamlets come
To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,
Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee
roam,
Or cross a stile into the public way.
Oft thou hast given them store
Of flowers—the frail-leafed, white anemone,
Dark bluebells drenched with dews of summer
eves,
And purple orchises with spotted leaves—
But none hath words she can report of thee.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time's here
In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,
Men who through those wide fields of breezy
grass,
Where black-winged swallows haunt the glittering
Thames,
To bathe in the abandoned lasher pass,
Have often passed thee near
Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown:
Marked thine outlandish garb, thy figure spare,
Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air;
But, when they came from bathing, thou wert gone.

At some lone homestead in the Cumnor hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range these slopes and late
For cresses from the rills,
Have known thee watching, all an April day,
The springing pastures and the feeding kine;
And marked thee, when the stars come out and
shine,
Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood,—
Where most the gipsies by the turf-edged way
Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush you see
With scarlet patches tagged and shreds of gray,
Above the forest-ground called Thessaly—
The blackbird picking food
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all;
So often has he known thee past him stray
Rapt, twirling in thy hand a withered spray,
And waiting for the spark from heaven to fall.

BOOK SIX

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill
Where home through flooded fields foot-travellers go,
Have I not passed thee on the wooden bridge
Wrapped in thy cloak and battling with the snow,
Thy face towards Hinksey and its wintry ridge?
And thou hast climbed the hill
And gained the white brow of the Cumnor range;
Turned once to watch, while thick the snowflakes
fall,
The line of festal light in Christ Church hall;
Then sought thy straw in some sequestered grange.

But what—I dream. Two hundred years are flown
Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale inscribe
That thou wert wandered from the studious walls
To learn strange arts, and join a gipsy tribe:
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard laid;
Some country nook, where o'er thy unknown
grave
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave,
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours.
For what wears out the life of mortal men?
'Tis that from change to change their being
rolls:
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls,
And numb the elastic powers.
Till, having used our nerves with bliss and teen,
And tired upon a thousand schemes our wit,
To the just-pausing Genius we remit
Our worn-out life, and are—what we have been.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Thou hast not lived, why shouldst thou perish, so?
Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire:
Else wert thou long since numbered with the
dead;
Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy fire.
The generations of thy peers are fled,
And we ourselves shall go:
But thou possessest an immortal lot,
And we imagine thee exempt from age
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's page,
Because thou hadst what we, alas, have not.

For early didst thou leave the world, with powers
Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
Firm to their mark, not spent on other things;
Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
Which much to have tried, in much been baffled,
brings.
O life unlike to ours,
Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he
strives,
And each half-lives a hundred different lives;
Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from heaven: and we,
Vague half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly willed,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,
Whose weak resolves never have been fulfilled;
For whom each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments new;
Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day—
Ah, do not we, wanderer, await it too?

BOOK SIX

Yes, we await it, but it still delays,
And then we suffer; and amongst us one,
Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and how the
head,
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest: and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try to bear,
With close-lipped patience for our only friend,
Sad patience, too near neighbour to despair:
But none has hope like thine.
Thou through the fields and through the woods dost
stray,
Roaming the country-side, a truant boy,
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,
And every doubt long blown by time away.

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames;
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its head o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife—
Fly hence, our contact fear.
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood.
Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern
From her false friend's approach in Hades turn,
Wave us away, and keep thy solitude.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
With a free onward impulse brushing through,
By night, the silvered branches of the glade,
Far on the forest-skirts, where none pursue,
On some mild pastoral slope
Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales,
Freshen thy flowers, as in former years,
With dew; or listen with enchanted ears,
From the dark dingles, to the nightingales.

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly;
For strong the infection of our mental strife,
Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for
rest;
And we should win thee from thy own fair life,
Like us distracted, and like us unblest.
Soon, soon thy cheer would die,
Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfixed thy powers,
And thy clear aims be cross and shifting made:
And then thy glad perennial youth would fade,
Fade, and grow old at last, and die like ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles;
—As some grave Tyrian trader, from the sea,
Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
Lifting the cool-haired creepers stealthily,
The fringes of a southward-facing brow
Among the Ægean isles;
And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
Freighted with amber grapes, and Chian wine,
Green bursting figs, and tunnies steeped in
brine;
And knew the intruders on his ancient home,

BOOK SIX

The young light-hearted masters of the waves;
And snatched his rudder, and shook out more sail,
And day and night held on indignantly
O'er the blue midland waters with the gale,
Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,
To where the Atlantic raves
Outside the western straits, and unbent sails
There, where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets of
foam,
Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come;
And on the beach undid his corded bales.

Matthew Arnold

275. *A song*

Oh, earlier shall the rosebuds blow
In after years, those happier years;
And children weep, when we lie low,
Far fewer tears, far softer tears.

Oh, true shall boyish laughter ring,
Like kindling chimes, in after times;
And merrier shall the maiden sing:
And I not there, and I not there.

Like lightning in the summer night
Their mirth shall be, so quick and free;
And oh, the flash of their delight
I shall not see, I may not see.

In deeper dream, with wider range,
Those eyes shall shine, but not on mine:
Unmoved, unblest, by worldly change,
The dead must rest, the dead must rest.

William Cory

THE POET'S PROGRESS

276. *Mimnermus in church*

You promise heavens free from strife,
Pure truth, and perfect change of will;
But sweet, sweet is this human life,
So sweet, I fain would breathe it still.
Your chilly stars I can forgo;
This warm kind world is all I know.

You say there is no substance here,
One great reality above:
Back from that void I shrink in fear,
And childlike hide myself in love.
Show me what angels feel; till then,
I cling, a mere weak man, to men.

You bid me lift my mean desires
From faltering lips and fitful veins
To sexless souls, ideal choirs,
Unwearied voices, wordless strains.
My mind with fonder welcome owns
One dear dead friend's remembered tones.

Forsooth the present we must give
To that which cannot pass away;
All beauteous things for which we live
By laws of time and space decay.
But oh, the very reason why
I clasp them is because they die.

William Cory

BOOK SIX

277. *Keith of Ravelston*

The murmur of the mourning ghost
That keeps the shadowy kine,
"Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!"

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The merry path that leads
Down the golden morning hill,
And through the silver meads;

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The stile beneath the tree,
The maid that kept her mother's kine,
The song that sang she!

She sang her song, she kept her kine,
She sat beneath the thorn,
When Andrew Keith of Ravelston
Rode through the Monday morn.

His henchmen sing, his hawk-bells ring,
His belted jewels shine.
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Year after year, where Andrew came,
Comes evening down the glade,
And still there sits a moonshine ghost
Where sat the sunshine maid.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Her misty hair is faint and fair,
She keeps the shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

I lay my hand upon the stile,
The stile is lone and cold;
The burnie that goes babbling by
Says naught that can be told.

Yet, stranger, here, from year to year,
She keeps her shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Step out three steps, where Andrew stood—
Why blanch thy cheeks for fear?
The ancient stile is not alone,
'Tis not the burn I hear.

She makes her immemorial moan,
She keeps her shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Sydney Dobell

278. *A country song, A chanted calendar*

First came the primrose,
On the bank high;
Like a maiden looking forth
From the window of a tower
When the battle rolls below,
So looked she,
And saw the storms go by.

BOOK SIX

Then came the wind-flower
In the valley left behind;
As a wounded maiden, pale
With purple streaks of woe,
When the battle has rolled by
Wanders to and fro,
So tottered she,
Dishevelled in the wind.

Then came the daisies,
On the first of May;
Like a bannered show's advance
While the crowd runs by the way,
With ten thousand flowers about them they came trooping
through the fields.

As a happy people come,
So came they,
As a happy people come
When the war has rolled away,
With dance and tabor, pipe and drum,
And all make holiday.

Then came the cowslip,
Like a dancer in the fair;
She spread her little mat of green,
And on it danced she,
With a fillet bound about her brow,
A fillet round her happy brow,
A golden fillet round her brow,
And rubies in her hair.

Sydney Dobell

THE POET'S PROGRESS

279. *America*

Nor force nor fraud shall sunder us, O ye
Who north or south, on east or western land,
Native to noble sounds, say truth for truth,
Freedom for freedom, love for love, and God
For God; O ye who in eternal youth
Speak with a living and creative flood
This universal English, and do stand
Its breathing book. Live worthy of that grand
Heroic utterance; parted, yet a whole;
Far, yet unsevered; children brave and free
Of the great mother-tongue: and ye shall be
Lords of an empire wide as Shakespeare's soul,
Sublime as Milton's immemorial theme,
And rich as Chaucer's speech, and fair as Spenser's
dream.

Sydney Dobell

280. *The Blessed Damozel*

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

BOOK SIX

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembering names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come" she said.
"Have I not prayed in heaven?—on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?"

BOOK SIX

“ When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
We will step down as to a stream,
And bathe there in God's sight.

“ We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

“ We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree,
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His name audibly.

“ And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know.”

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st.
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

THE POET'S PROGRESS

" We two " she said " will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret, and Rosalys.

" Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

" He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

" Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

" There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
With love; only to be,
As then awhile, for ever now
Together, I and he ".

BOOK SIX

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less of sad speech than mild,
"All this is when he comes". She ceased.
The light thrilled towards her, filled
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

D. G. Rossetti

281. *A Birthday*

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot;
My heart is like an apple tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves, and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves, and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

Christina Rossetti

THE POET'S PROGRESS

282. *Song*

When I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain;
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

Christina Rossetti

283. *Lines on hearing the organ*

Grinder, who serenely grindest
At my door the Hundredth Psalm,
Till thou ultimately findest
Pence in thy unwashen palm;

Grinder, jocund-hearted grinder,
Near whom Barbary's nimble son,
Poised with skill upon his hinder-
Paws, accepts my proffered bun;

BOOK SIX

Dearly do I love thy grinding,
Joy to meet thee on the road,
Where thou prowlest through the blinding
Dust with that stupendous load,

'Neath the baleful star of Sirius,
When the postmen slower jog,
And the ox becomes delirious,
And the muzzle decks the dog.

Tell me by what art thou bindest
On thy feet those ancient shoon;
Tell me, grinder, if thou grindest
Always, always, out of tune.

Tell me if, as thou art buckling
On thy straps with eager claws,
Thou forecastest, inly chuckling,
All the rage that thou wilt cause.

Tell me if at all thou mindest
When folk flee as if on wings
From thee as at ease thou grindest:
Tell me fifty thousand things.

Grinder, gentle-hearted grinder,
Ruffians who lead evil lives,
Soothed by thy sweet strains are kinder
To their bullocks and their wives:

Children, when they see thy supple
Form approach, are out like shots;
Half a bar sets several couple
Waltzing in convenient spots;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Not with clumsy Jacks or Georges;
Unprofaned by grasp of man,
Maidens speed those simple orgies,
Betsey Jane with Betsey Ann.

As they love thee in St. Giles's
Thou art loved in Grosvenor Square;
None of those engaging smiles is
Unreciprocated there.

Often, ere thou yet hast hammered
Through thy four delicious airs,
Coins are flung thee by enamoured
Housemaids upon area stairs;

E'en the ambrosial-whiskered flunkey
Eyes thy boots and thine unkempt
Beard and melancholy monkey
More in pity than contempt.

Far from England, in the sunny
South, where Anio leaps in foam,
Thou wast reared, till lack of money
Drew thee from thy vineclad home.

And thy mate, the sinewy Jocko,
From Brazil or Afric came,
Land of simoom and sirocco—
And he seems extremely tame.

There he quaffed the undefiled
Spring, or hung with apeline glee
By his tail, or teeth, or eyelid,
To the slippery mango tree:

There he wooed and won a dusky
Bride, of instincts like his own;
Talked of love till he was husky
In a tongue to us unknown.

BOOK SIX

Side by side 'twas theirs to ravage
The potato ground, or cut
Down the unsuspecting savage
With a well-aimed cocoanut;
Till the miscreant stranger tore him
Screaming from his blue-faced fair;
And they flung strange raiment o'er him,
Raiment which he could not bear.
Severed from the pure embraces
Of his children and his spouse,
He must ride fantastic races
Mounted on reluctant sows.
But the heart of wistful Jocko
Still was with his ancient flame
In the nutgroves of Morocco—
Or if not it's all the same.
Grinder, winsome, grinsome grinder,
They who see thee and whose soul
Melts not at thy charms are blinder
Than a treble-bandaged mole;
They to whom thy curt (yet clever)
Talk, thy music, and thine ape
Seem not to be joys for ever
Are but brutes in human shape.
'Tis not that thy mien is stately;
'Tis not that thy tones are soft;
'Tis not that I care so greatly
For the same thing played so oft:
But I've heard mankind abuse thee;
And perhaps it's rather strange,
But I thought that I would choose thee
For encomium, as a change.

C. S. Calverley

THE POET'S PROGRESS

284. *A Garden by the Sea*

I know a little garden-close
Set thick with lily and red rose,
Where I would wander if I might
From dewy dawn to dewy night,
And have one with me wandering.

And though within it no birds sing,
And though no pillared house is there,
And though the apple boughs are bare
Of fruit and blossom, would to God
Her feet upon the green grass trod,
And I beheld them as before!

There comes a murmur from the shore,
And in the place two fair streams are,
Drawn from the purple hills afar,
Drawn down unto the restless sea;
The hills whose flowers ne'er fed the bee,
The shore no ship has ever seen,
Still beaten by the billows green,
Whose murmur comes unceasingly
Unto the place for which I cry.

For which I cry both day and night,
For which I let slip all delight,
That maketh me both deaf and blind,
Careless to win, unskilled to find,
And quick to lose what all men seek.

BOOK SIX

Yet tottering as I am, and weak,
Still have I left a little breath
To seek within the jaws of death
An entrance to that happy place;
To seek the unforgotten face
Once seen, once kissed, once reft from me
Anigh the murmuring of the sea.

William Morris

285. *The Garden of Proserpine*

Here, where the world is quiet;
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep;
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers
And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbour,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labour,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes,
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

BOOK SIX

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
And joy was never sure;
To-day will die to-morrow;
Time stoops to no man's lure;
And love, grown faint and fretful,
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives for ever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Then star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken,
Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.

A. C. Swinburne

286. *A Forsaken Garden*

In a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland,
At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee,
Walled round with rocks as an inland island,
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.
A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses
The steep square slope of the blossomless bed
Where the weeds that grew green from the graves of its
roses
Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,
To the low last edge of the long lone land.
If a step should sound or a word be spoken,
Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's hand?
So long have the gray bare walks lain guestless,
Through branches and briers if a man make way
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless
Night and day.

BOOK SIX

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled
That crawls by a track none turn to climb
To the strait waste place that the years have rifled
Of all but the thorns that are touched not of time.
The thorns he spares when the rose is taken;
The rocks are left when he wastes the plain.
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-shaken,
These remain.

Not a flower to be pressed of the foot that falls not;
As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots are dry;
From the thicket of thorns whence the nightingale calls
not,
Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.
Over the meadows that blossom and wither
Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song;
Only the sun and the rain come hither
All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels
One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
Only the wind here hovers and revels
In a round where life seems barren as death.
Here there was laughing of old, there was weeping,
Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping
Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, "Look thither,"
Did he whisper? "look forth from the flowers to the sea;
For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-blossoms
wither,
And men that love lightly may die—but we?"
And the same wind sang and the same waves whitened,
And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,
In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that had lightened,
Love was dead.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Or they loved their life through, and then went whither?
And were one to the end—but what end who knows?
Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,
As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.
Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love them?
What love was ever as deep as a grave?
They are loveless now as the grass above them,
Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,
Not known of the cliffs and the fields and the sea.
Not a breath of the time that has been hovers
In the air now soft with a summer to be.
Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons hereafter
Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now or weep,
When as they that are free now of weeping and laughter
We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again for ever;
Here change may come not till all change end.
From the graves they have made they shall rise up never,
Who have left nought living to ravage and rend.
Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground growing,
While the sun and the rain live, these shall be;
Till a last wind's breath upon all these blowing
Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble,
Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,
Till the strength of the waves of the high tides humble
The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink;
Here now in his triumph where all things falter,
Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand spread,
As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
Death lies dead.

A. C. Swinburne

BOOK SIX

287. *The Ladies of St. James's*

The ladies of St. James's
Go swinging to the play;
Their-footmen run before them
With a "Stand by; clear the way."
But Phyllida, my Phyllida,
She takes her buckled shoon,
When we go out a-courting
Beneath the harvest moon.

The ladies of St. James's
Wear satin on their backs;
They sit all night at ombre,
With candles all of wax;
But Phyllida, my Phyllida,
She dons her russet gown,
And runs to gather May dew
Before the world is down.

The ladies of St. James's
They are so fine and fair,
You'd think a box of essences
Was broken in the air;
But Phyllida, my Phyllida,—
The breath of heath and furze,
When breezes blow at morning,
Is not so fresh as hers.

The ladies of St. James's
They're painted to the eyes;
Their white it stays for ever;
Their red it never dies:

THE POET'S PROGRESS

But Phyllida, my Phyllida,—
Her colour comes and goes;
It trembles to a lily,
It wavers to a rose.

The ladies of St. James's—
You scarce can understand
The half of all their speeches,
Their phrases are so grand:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida,—
Her shy and simple words
Are clear as after rain-drops
The music of the birds.

The ladies of St. James's
They have their fits and freaks;
They smile on you—for seconds;
They frown on you—for weeks:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida,
Come either storm or shine,
From Shrovetide unto Shrovetide
Is always true—and mine.

My Phyllida, my Phyllida,—
I care not though they heap
The hearts of all St. James's,
And give me all to keep;
I care not whose the beauties
Of all the world may be,
For Phyllida, for Phyllida,
Is all the world to me.

Austin Dobson

BOOK SIX

288. *Ode*

We are the music makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample a kingdom down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself in our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

A breath of our inspiration
Is the life of each generation;
A wondrous thing of our dreaming,
Unearthly, impossible seeming.
The soldier, the king, and the peasant
Are working together in one,
Till our dream shall become their present,
And their work in the world be done.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

They had no vision amazing
Of the goodly house they are raising;
 They had no divine foreshowing
 Of the land to which they are going:
But on one man's soul it hath broken,
 A light that doth not depart;
And his look, or a word he hath spoken,
 Wrought flame in another man's heart.

And therefore to-day is thrilling
With a past day's late fulfilling;
 And the multitudes are enlisted
 In the faith that their fathers resisted,
And, scorning the dream of to-morrow,
 Are bringing to pass, as they may,
In the world, for its joy or its sorrow,
 The dream that was scorned yesterday.

But we, with our dreaming and singing,
 Ceaseless and sorrowless we,
The glory about us clinging
 Of the glorious futures we see,
Our souls with high music ringing:
 O men, it must ever be
That we dwell, in our dreaming and singing,
 A little apart from ye.

For we are afar with the dawning
 And the suns that are not yet high,
And out of the infinite morning
 Intrepid you hear us cry
How, spite of your human scorning,
 Once more God's future draws nigh,
And already goes forth the warning
 That ye of the past must die.

BOOK SIX

Great hail! we cry to the comers
From the dazzling unknown shore;
Bring us hither your sun and your summers,
And renew our world as of yore;
You shall teach us your song's new numbers,
And things that we dreamed not before:
Yea, in spite of a dreamer who slumbers,
And a singer who sings no more.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy

289. *The loss of the Eurydice*

Foundered March 24, 1878

The Eurydice—it concerned Thee, O Lord!
Three hundred souls, O alas! on board,
Some asleep, unawakened, all un-
Warned, eleven fathoms fallen

Where she foundered. One stroke
Felled and furled them, the hearts of oak.
And flockbells off the aerial
Downs' forefalls beat to the burial.

For did she pride her, freighted fully, on
Bounden bales or a hoard of bullion?
Precious beyond measure
Lads and men her lade and treasure.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

She had come from a cruise, training seamen—
Men, bold boys soon to be men:
Must it, worst weather,
Blast bole and bloom together?

No Atlantic squall overwrought her
Or rearing billow of the Biscay water:
Home was hard at hand
And the blow bore from land.

And you were a liar, O blue March day.
Bright sun lanced fire in the heavenly bay;
But what black Boreas wrecked her? he
Came equipped, deadly-electric,

A beetling bold-bright cloud through England
Riding; there did showers not mingle? and
Hailropes hustle and grind their
Heavengravel? wolfsnow, worlds of it, wind there?

Now Garisbrook Keep goes under in gloom;
Now it overvaults Appledurcombe;
Now near by Ventnor town
It hurls, hurls off Boniface Down

Too proud, too proud, what a press she bore.
Royal, and all her royals wore.
Sharp with her, shorten sail!
Too late; lōst; gone with the gale.

This was that fell capsize,
As half she had righted and hoped to rise,
Death teeming in by her portholes
Raced down decks, round messes of mortals.

BOOK SIX

Then a lurch forward, frigate and men;
"All hands for themselves" the cry ran then.
But she who had housed them thither
Was around them, bound them or wound them with her.

Marcus Hare, high her captain,
Kept to her, care-drowned and wrapped in
Cheer's death, would follow
His charge through the champ-white water-in-a-wallow,

All under channel to bury in a beach her
Cheeks: right, rude of feature,
He thought he heard her say,
"Her commander! and thou too, and thou this way".

It is even seen, time's something server,
In mankind's medley a duty-swerwer,
At downright "No or Yes?"
Doffs all, drives full for righteousness.

Sydney Fletcher, Bristol-bred
(Low lie his mates now on watery bed)
Takes to the seas and snows
As sheer down the ship goes.

Now her after-draught gullies him down too;
Now he wrings for life with the deathgush brown;
Till a life-belt and God's will
Lend him a lift from the sea-swirl.

Now he shoots up short to the round air;
Now he gasps, now he gazes everywhere;
But his eye no cliff, no coast or
Mark makes in the rivelling snowstorm.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Him, after an hour of wintery waves,
A schooner sights, with another, and saves,
And he boards in oh! such joy
He has lost count what came next, poor boy.

They say who saw one sea-corpse cold
He was all of lovely manly mould,
Every inch a tar,
Of the best we boast our sailors are.

Look, foot to forelock, how all things suit: he
Is strung by duty, is strained to beauty,
And brown-as-dawning-skinned
With brine and shine and whirling wind.

O his nimble finger, his gnarled grip!
Leagues, leagues of seamanship
Slumber in these forsaken
Bones, this sinew, and will not waken.

He was but one like thousands more.
Day and night I deplore
My people and born own nation,
Fast foundering own generation.

I might let bygones be—our curse
Of ruinous shrine no hand (or, worse,
Robbery's hand) is busy to
Dress, hoar-hallowed shrines unvisited;

Only the breathing temple and fleet
Life, this wildworth blown so sweet,
These daredeaths, ay this crew, in
Unchrist, all rolled in ruin—

BOOK SIX

Deeply surely I need to deplore it,
Wondering why my master bore it,
The riving off that race
So at home, time was, to his truth and grace

That a starlight wender of ours would say
The marvellous Milk was Walsingham Way
And one—but let be, let be:
More, more than was will yet be.

O well wept, mother have lost son;
Wept, wife; wept, sweetheart would be one:
Though grief yield them no good,
Yet shed what tears sad truelove should.

But to Christ lord of thunder
Crouch; lay knee by earth low under,
“ Holiest, loveliest, bravest,
Save my hero, O Hero savest.”

And the prayer thou hear'st me making
Have, at the awful overtaking,
Heard; have heard and granted
Grace that day grace was wanted?

Not that hell knows redeeming,
But for souls sunk in seeming
Fresh, till doomfire burn all,
Prayer shall fetch pity eternal.

G. M. Hopkins

THE POETS PROGRESS

290. *Pro rege nostro*

What have I done for you,
 England, my England?
What is there I would not do,
 England, my own?
With your glorious eyes austere,
As the Lord were walking near,
Whispering terrible things and dear
 As the song on your bugles blown, England,
 Round the world on your bugles blown.

Where shall the watchful sun,
 England, my England,
Match the master-work you've done,
 England, my own?
When shall he rejoice again
Such a breed of mighty men
As come forward, one to ten,
 To the song on your bugles blown, England,
 Down the years on your bugles blown?

Ever the faith endures,
 England, my England:—
“Take and break us: we are yours,
 England, my own.

Life is good, and joy runs high
Between English earth and sky:
Death is death; but we shall die
 To the song on your bugles blown, England,
 To the stars on your bugles blown.”

They call you proud and hard,
 England, my England:
You with worlds to watch and ward,
 England, my own.
You whose mailed hand keeps the keys
Of such teeming destinies,

BOOK SIX

You could know nor dread nor ease
 Were the song on your bugles blown, England,
 Round the pit on your bugles blown.

Mother of ships whose might,
 England, my England,
Is the fierce old sea's delight,
 England, my own,
Chosen daughter of the Lord,
Spouse-in-chief of the ancient Sword,
There's the menace of the Word
 In the song on your bugles blown, England,
 Out of heaven on your bugles blown.

W. E. Henley

291. *Out of the night that covers me*

Out of the night that covers me,
 Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
 For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
 I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
 My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
 Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
 Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
 How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
 I am the captain of my soul.

W. E. Henley

THE POET'S PROGRESS

292. *O gather me the rose*

O gather me the rose, the rose,
While yet in flower we find it;
For summer comes, but summer goes,
And winter waits behind it.

For with the dream foregone, foregone,
The deed forborne for ever,
The worm Regret will canker on,
And Time will turn him never.

So well it were to love, my love,
And cheat of any laughter
The fate beneath us and above,
The dark before and after.

The myrtle and the rose, the rose!
The sunshine and the swallow!
The dream that comes, the wish that goes!
The memories that follow!

W. E. Henley

293. *Requiem*

Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie:
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

R. L. Stevenson

BOOK SIX

294. *The Vagabond*

Give to me the life I love,
Let the lave go by me,
Give the jolly heaven above
And the byway nigh me.
Bed in the bush with stars to see,
Bread I dip in the river—
There's the life for a man like me,
There's the life for ever.

Let the blow fall soon or late,
Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around
And the road before me.
Wealth I seek not, hope nor love,
Nor a friend to know me;
All I seek, the heaven above,
And the road below me.

Or let autumn fall on me
Where afield I linger,
Silencing the bird on tree,
Biting the blue finger.
White as meal the frosty field,
Warm the fireside haven,—
Not to autumn will I yield,
Not to winter even.

Let the blow fall soon or late,
Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around,
And the road before me.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Wealth I ask not, hope nor love,
Nor a friend to know me;
All I ask, the heaven above,
And the road below me.

R. L. Stevenson

295. *The House Beautiful*

*A naked house, a naked moor,
A shivering pool before the door,
A garden bare of flowers and fruit
And poplars at the garden foot;
Such is the place that I live in,
Black without and bare within.*

Yet shall your ragged moor receive
The incomparable pomp of eve,
And the cold glories of the dawn
Behind your shivering trees be drawn;
And when the wind from place to place
Doth the unmoored cloud-galleons chase,
Your garden gloom and gleam again
With leaping sun, with glancing rain.
Here shall the wizard moon ascend
The heavens, in the crimson end
Of day's declining splendour; here
The army of the stars appear.
The neighbour hollows, dry or wet,
Spring shall with tender flowers beset;
And oft the morning muser see
Larks rising from the broomy lea,
And every fairy wheel and thread
Of cobweb dew-bediamonded.
When daisies go, shall winter-time
Silver the simple grass with rime;

BOOK SIX

Autumnal frosts enchant the pool
And make the cart ruts beautiful;
And when snow-bright the moor expands
How shall your children clap their hands!
To make this earth our hermitage
A cheerful and a changeful page
God's bright and intricate device
Of days and seasons doth suffice.

R. L. Stevenson

296. I will make you brooches

I will make you brooches and toys for your delight
Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night.
I will make a palace fit for you and me,
Of green days in forests and blue days at sea.

I will make my kitchen, and you shall keep your room,
Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom,
And you shall wash your linen and keep your body white
In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.

And this shall be for music when no one else is near,
The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear,
That only I remember, that only you admire,
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire.

R. L. Stevenson

THE POET'S PROGRESS

297. *Ode in May*

Let me go forth, and share
The overflowing sun
With one wise friend, or one
Better than wise, being fair,
Where the pewit wheels and dips
On heights of bracken and ling,
And earth, unto her leaflet tips,
Tingles with the spring.

What is so sweet and dear
As a prosperous morn in May,
The confident prime of the day,
And the dauntless youth of the year,
When nothing that asks for bliss,
Asking aright, is denied,
And half of the world a bridegroom is,
And half of the world a bride?

The song of mingling flows,
Grave, ceremonial, pure,
As once, from lips that endure,
The cosmic descant rose,
When the temporal lord of life,
Going his golden way,
Had taken a wondrous maid to wife
That long had said him nay.

For of old the sun, our sire,
Came wooing the mother of men,
Earth, that was virginal then,
Vestal fire to his fire.

BOOK SIX

Silent her bosom and coy,
But the strong god sued and pressed;
And born of their starry nuptial joy
Are all that drink of her breast.

And the triumph of him that begot,
And the travail of her that bore,
Behold they are evermore
As warp and weft in our lot.
We are children of splendour and flame,
Of shuddering, also, and tears.
Magnificent out of the dust we came,
And abject from the spheres.

O bright irresistible lord,
We are fruit of earth's womb, each one,
And fruit of thy loins, O sun,
Whence first was the seed outpoured.
To thee as our father we bow,
Forbidden thy Father to see,
Who is older and greater than thou, as thou
Art greater and older than we.

Thou art but as a word of his speech;
Thou art but as a wave of his hand;
Thou art brief as a glitter of sand
'Twixt tide and tide on his beach;
Thou art less than a spark of his fire,
Or a moment's mood of his soul:
Thou art lost in the notes on the lips of his choir
That chant the chant of the whole.

Sir William Watson

THE POET'S PROGRESS

298. *England my mother*

England my mother,
Wardress of waters,
Builder of peoples,
Maker of men,

Hast thou yet leisure
Left for the muses?
Heed'st thou the songsmith
Forging the rhyme?

Deafened with tumults,
How canst thou hearken?
Strident is faction,
Demos is loud.

Lazarus, hungry,
Menaces Dives;
Labour the giant
Chafes in his hold.

Yet do the songsmiths
Quit not their forges;
Still on life's anvil
Forge they the rhyme.

Still the rapt faces
Glow from the furnace;
Breath of the smithy
Scorches their brows.

BOOK SIX

Yea, and thou hear'st them?
So shall the hammers
Fashion not vainly
Verses of gold.

II

Lo, with the ancient
Roots of man's nature
Twines the eternal
Passion of song.

Ever love faces it;
Ever life feeds it;
Time cannot age it;
Death cannot slay.

Deep in the world-heart
Stand its foundations,
Tangled with all things
Twin-made with all.

Nay, what is nature's
Self, but an endless
Strife towards music,
Euphony, rhyme?

Trees in their blooming,
Tides in their flowing,
Stars in their circling,
Tremble with song.

God on his throne is
Eldest of poets:
Unto His measures
Moveth the whole.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

III

Therefore deride not
Speech of the muses,
England my mother,
Maker of men.

Nations are mortal;
Fragile is greatness;
Fortune may fly thee;
Song shall not fly.

Song the all-girdling,
Song cannot perish:
Men shall make music;
Man shall give ear.

Not while the choric
Chant of creation
Floweth from all things,
Poured without pause,

Cease we to echo
Faintly the descant
Whereto forever
Dances the world.

IV

So let the songsmith
Proffer his rhyme-gift,
England my mother,
Maker of men.

BOOK SIX

Gray grows thy countenance,
Full of the ages;
Time on thy forehead
Sits like a dream.

Song is the potion
All things renewing,
Youth's one elixir,
Fountain of morn.

Thou, at the world-loom
Weaving thy future,
Fitly may'st temper
Toil with delight.

Deemest thou labour
Only is earnest?
Grave is all beauty;
Solemn is joy.

Song is no bauble.
Slight not the songsmith,
England my mother,
Maker of men.

Sir William Watson

299. *The Darkling Thrush*

I leant upon a coppice gate
When frost was spectre-gray,
And winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken, hard, and dry.
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead,
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carollings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed hope, whereof he knew,
And I was unaware.

Thomas Hardy, December 1900

BOOK SEVEN

300. *There is a hill*

There is a hill beside the silver Thames
Shady with birch and beech and odorous pine;
And brilliant underfoot with thousand gems
Steeply the thickets to his floods decline.

 Straight trees in every place
 Their thick tops interlace,
And pendent branches trail their foliage fine
 Upon his watery face.

Swift from the sweltering pasturage he flows:
His stream, alert to seek the pleasant shade,
Pictures his gentle purpose, as he goes
Straight to the caverned pool his toil has made.

 His winter floods lay bare
 The stout roots in the air;
His summer streams are cool, when they have played
 Among their fibrous hair.

A rushy island guards the sacred bower,
And hides it from the meadow, where in peace
The lazy cows wrench many a scented flower,
Robbing the golden market of the bees;
 And laden barges float
 By banks of myosote;
And scented flag and golden fleur-de-lys
 Delay the loitering boat.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And on this side the island, where the pool
Eddies away, are tangled mass on mass
The water-weeds, that net the fishes cool,
And scarce allow a narrow stream to pass;
 Where spreading crowfoot mars
 The drowning nenuphars,
Waving the tassels of her silken grass
 Below her silver stars.

But in the purple pool there nothing grows,
Not the white water-lily spoked with gold;
Though best she loves the hollows, and well knows
On quiet streams her broad shields to unfold;
 Yet should her roots but try
 Within these deeps to lie,
Not her long-reaching stalk could ever hold
 Her waxen head so high.

Sometimes an angler comes, and drops his hook
Within its hidden depths, and 'gainst a tree
Leaning his rod, reads in some pleasant book,
Forgetting soon his pride of fishery;
 And dreams, or falls asleep,
 While curious fishes peep
About his nibbled bait, or scornfully
 Dart off and rise and leap.

And sometimes a slow figure 'neath the trees,
In ancient-fashioned smock, with tottering care
Upon a staff propping his weary knees,
May by the pathway of the forest fare;—
 As from a buried day
 Across the mind will stray
Some perishing mute shadow—and unaware
 He passeth on his way.

BOOK SEVEN

Else, he that wishes solitude is safe,
Whether he bathe at morning in the stream
Or lead his love there when the hot hours chafe
The meadows, busy with a blurring steam;
Or watch, as fades the light,
The gibbous moon grow bright,
Until her magic rays dance in a dream,
And glorify the night.

Where is this bower beside the silver Thames?
O pool and flowery thickets, hear my vow!
O trees of freshest foliage and straight stems,
No sharer of my secret I allow;
Lest ere I come the while
Strange feet your shades defile;
Or lest the burly oarsman turn his prow
Within your guardian isle.

Robert Bridges

301. *I love all beauteous things*

I love all beauteous things,
I seek and adore them;
God hath no better praise,
And man in his hasty days
Is honoured for them.

I too will something make
And joy in the making;
Although to-morrow it seem
Like the empty words of a dream
Remembered on waking.

Robert Bridges

THE POET'S PROGRESS

302. *Nightingales*

Beautiful must be the mountains whence ye come,
And bright in the fruitful valleys the streams where-
from

Ye learn your song:
Where are those starry woods? O might I wander there,
Among the flowers, which in that heavenly air
Bloom the year long.

Nay, barren are those mountains and spent the streams:
Our song is the voice of desire, that haunts our dreams,
A throë of the heart,
Whose pining visions dim, forbidden hopes profound,
No dying cadence nor long sigh can sound,
For all our art.

Alone, aloud in the raptured ear of men
We pour our dark nocturnal secret; and then,
As night is withdrawn
From these sweet-springing meads and bursting boughs,
of May,
Dream, while the innumerable choir of day
Welcome the dawn.

Robert Bridges

303. *Verses from "A Shropshire Lad"*

i. Loveliest of trees

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Easter-tide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten
Twenty will not come again;
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

ii. Into my heart an air that kills

Into my heart an air that kills
From yon far country blows:
What are those blue remembered hills,
What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content,
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways that I went
And cannot come again.

iii. Loitering with a vacant eye

Loitering with a vacant eye
Along the Grecian gallery,
And brooding on my heavy ill,
I met a statue standing still.
Still in marble stone stood he,
And stedfastly he looked at me.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

"Well met" I thought the look would say;
"We were both fashioned far away;
We neither knew, when we were young,
These Londoners we live among."
Still he stood and eyed me hard,
An earnest and a grave regard:
"What, lad, drooping with your lot?
I too would be where I am not.
I too survey that endless line
Of men whose thoughts are not as mine.
Years, ere you stood up from rest,
On my neck the collar pressed;
Years, when you lay down your ill,
I shall stand and bear it still.
Courage, lad, 'tis not for long:
Stand, quit you like stone, be strong."
So I thought his look would say;
And light on me my trouble lay,
And I stepped out in flesh and bone
Manful like the man of stone.

A. E. Housman

304. *He fell among thieves*

"Ye have robbed," said he ye have slaughtered and
 made an end;
 Take your ill-got plunder, and bury the dead:
What will ye more of your guest and sometime friend?"
 "Blood for our blood" they said.

He laughed: "If one may settle the score for five,
 I am ready; but let the reckoning stand till day:
I have loved the sunlight as dearly as any alive."
 "You shall die at dawn" said they.

BOOK SEVEN

He flung his empty revolver down the slope;
He climbed alone to the eastward edge of the trees;
All night long in a dream untroubled of hope
He brooded, clasping his knees.

He did not hear the monotonous roar that fills
The ravine where the Yassîn river sullenly flows;
He did not see the starlight on the Laspur hills,
Or the far Afghan snows.

He saw the April noon on his books aglow,
The wistaria trailing in at the window wide;
He heard his father's voice from the terrace below
Calling him down to ride.

He saw the gray little church across the park,
The mounds that hid the loved and honoured dead;
The Norman arch, the chancel softly dark,
The brasses black and red.

He saw the School Close, sunny and green,
The runner beside him, the stand by the parapet wall,
The distant tape, and the crowd roaring between
His own name over all.

He saw the dark wainscot and timbered roof,
The long tables, and the faces merry and keen;
The College Eight and their trainer dining aloof,
The Dons on the dais serene.

He watched the liner's stem ploughing the foam;
He felt her tremblingspeed and the thrash of her screw;
He heard the passengers' voices talking of home;
He saw the flag she flew.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And now it was dawn. He rose strong on his feet,
And strode to his ruined camp below the wood;
He drank the breath of the morning cool and sweet:
His murderers round him stood.

Light on the Laspur hills was broadening fast,
The blood-red snow-peaks chilled to a dazzling white;
He turned, and saw the golden circle at last,
Cut by the eastern height.

"O glorious Life, Who dwellest in earth and sun,
I have lived, I praise and adore Thee."

A sword swept.

Over the pass the voices one by one
Faded, and the hill slept.

Sir Henry Newbolt

305. *Drake's Drum*

Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Slung atween the round shot in Nombro Dios bay,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Yarnder lumes the Island, yarnder lie the ships,
Wi' sailor-lads a-dancin' heel-an'-toe,
An' the shore-lights flashin', an' the night-tide dashin';
He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.

Drake he was a Devon man, an' ruled the Devon seas,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Rovin' though his death fell, he went wi' heart at ease,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
"Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them
long ago."

BOOK SEVEN

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas come,
 (Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Slung atween the round shot, listenin' for the drum,
 An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
 Call him when ye sail to meet the foe:
Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag flyin'
 They shall find him ware an' wakin', as they found
 him long ago.

Sir Henry Newbolt

306. *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made:
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
 And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes
 dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the
 cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
 And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
 I hear it in the deep heart's core.

W. B. Yeats

THE POET'S PROGRESS

307. *Into the twilight*

Outworn heart in a time outworn,
Come clear of the nets of wrong and right ;
Laugh, heart, again in the gray twilight;
Sigh, heart, again in the dew of the morn.

Your mother Eire is always young,
Dew ever shining and twilight gray;
Though hope fall from you and love decay,
Burning in fires of a slanderous tongue.

Come, heart, where hill is heaped upon hill:
For there the mystical brotherhood
Of sun and moon and hollow and wood
And river and stream work out their will;

And God stands winding His lonely horn;
And time and the world are ever in flight,
And love is less kind than the gray twilight,
And hope is less dear than the dew of the morn.

W. B. Yeats

308. *When you are old*

When you are old and gray and full of sleep
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

BOOK SEVEN

And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

W. B. Yeats

309. *Duncton Hill*

He does not die that can bequeath
Some influence to the land he knows,
Or dares, persistent, interwreath
Love permanent with the wild hedgerows.
He does not die, but still remains
Substantiate with his darling plains.

The spring's superb adventure calls
His dust athwart the woods to flame;
His boundary river's secret falls
Perpetuate and repeat his name.
He rides his loud October sky.
He does not die. He does not die.

The beeches know the accustomed head
Which loved them, and a peopled air
Beneath their benediction spread
Comforts the silence everywhere;
For native ghosts return, and these
Perfect the mystery in the trees.

So, therefore, though myself be crossed
The shuddering of that dreadful day
When friend and fire and home are lost,
And even children drawn away—
The passerby shall hear me still,
A boy that sings on Duncton Hill.

Hilaire Belloc

THE POET'S PROGRESS

310. *The South Country*

When I am living in the Midlands,
That are sodden and unkind,
I light my lamp in the evening;
My work is left behind;
And the great hills of the South Country
Come back into my mind.

The great hills of the South Country
They stand along the sea,
And it's there, walking in the high woods,
That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Walking along with me.

The men that live in North England
I saw them for a day;
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
Their skies are fast and gray;
From their castle-walls a man may see
The mountains far away.

The men that live in West England
They see the Severn strong,
A-rolling on rough water brown
Light aspen leaves along.
They have the secret of the Rocks
And the oldest kind of song.

But the men who live in the South Country
Are the kindest and most wise;
They get their laughter from the loud surf,
And the faith in their happy eyes
Comes surely from our sister the spring
When over the sea she flies;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet;
She blesses us with surprise.

BOOK SEVEN

I never get between the pines
But I smell the Sussex air;
Nor I never come on a belt of sand
But my home is there.
And along the sky the line of the Downs
So noble and so bare.

A lost thing could I never find,
Nor a broken thing mend:
And I fear I shall be all alone
When I get towards the end.
Who will be there to comfort me,
Or who will be my friend?

I will gather and carefully make my friends
Of the men of the Sussex Weald;
They watch the stars from silent folds,
They stiffly plough the field;
By them and the God of the South Country
My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
Or if ever I grow to be old,
I will build a house with deep thatch
To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood,
Within a walk of the sea.
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Shall sit and drink with me.

Hilaire Belloc

THE POET'S PROGRESS

311. *Leisure*

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?
No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows:
No time to see when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass;
No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night;
No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance;
No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began?
A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

W. H. Davies

312. *The Kingfisher*

It was the rainbow gave thee birth,
And left thee all her lovely hues;
And as her mother's name was Tears,
So runs it in thy blood to choose
For haunts the lonely pools, and keep
In company with trees that weep.

Go you and, with such glorious hues,
Live with proud peacocks in green parks;
On lawns as smooth as shining glass
Let every feather show its marks;
Get thee on boughs and clap thy wings
Before the windows of proud kings.

BOOK SEVEN

Nay, lovely bird, thou art not vain;
Thou hast no proud ambitious mind;
I also love a quiet place
That's green, away from all mankind;
A lonely pool; and let a tree
Sigh with its bosom over me.

W. H. Davies

313. *Arabia*

Far are the shades of Arabia,
Where the Princes ride at noon,
'Mid the verdurous vales and thickets,
Under the ghost of the moon;
And so dark is that vaulted purple
Flowers in the forest rise
And toss into blossom 'gainst the phantom stars
Pale in the noonday skies.

Sweet is the music of Arabia
In my heart, where out of dreams
I still in the thin clear mirk of dawn
Descry her gliding streams;
Hear her strange lutes on the green banks
Ring loud with the grief and delight
Of the dim-silked, dark-haired musicians
In the brooding silence of night.

They haunt me—her lutes and her forests;
No beauty on earth I see
But shadowed with that dream recalls
Her loveliness to me:
Still eyes look coldly on me,
Cold voices whisper and say
“He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia;
They have stolen his wits away”.

Walter de la Mare

THE POET'S PROGRESS

314. *All that's past*

Very old are the woods;
And the buds that break
Out of the briar's boughs,
When March winds wake,
So old with their beauty are—
Oh, no man knows
Through what wild centuries
Roves back the rose.

Very old are the brooks;
And the rills that rise
Where snow sleeps cold beneath
The azure skies
Sing such a history
Of come and gone,
Their every drop is as wise
As Solomon.

Very old are we men;
Our dreams are tales
Told in dim Eden
By Eve's nightingales;
We wake and whisper awhile,
But, the day gone by,
Silence and sleep like fields
Of amaranth lie.

Walter de la Mare

BOOK SEVEN

315. *A riddle*

The mild noon air of spring again
Lapped shimmering on that sea-lulled lane.
Hazel was budding; wan as snow
The leafless blackthorn was a-blow.

A chaffinch clankt, a robin woke
An eerie stave in the leafless oak.
Green mocked at green; lichen and moss
The rain-worn slate did softly emboss.

From out her winter lair, at sigh
Of the warm south wind, a butterfly
Stepped, quaffed her honey; on painted fan
Her labyrinthine flight began.

Wondrously solemn, golden and fair,
The high sun's rays beat everywhere;
Yea, touched my cheek and mouth, as if,
Equal with stone, to me 'twould give

Its light and life. O restless thought,
Contented not; with "why?" distraught!
Whom asked you then your riddle small?
"If hither came no man at all

Through this gray-green, sea-haunted lane,
Would it mere blackened nought remain?
Strives it this beauty and life to express
Only in human consciousness?

Or, rather, idle breaks he in
To an Eden innocent of sin;
And, prouder than to be afraid,
Forgets his Maker in the made?"

Walter de la Mare

THE POET'S PROGRESS

316. *An epitaph*

Here lies a most beautiful lady;
Light of step and heart was she;
I think she was the most beautiful lady
That ever was in the West Country.
But beauty vanishes; beauty passes;
However rare—rare it be;
And when I crumble, who will remember
This lady of the West Country?

Walter de la Mare

317. *In Memoriam, A. H.*

*Auberon Herbert, Captain Lord Lucas, R.F.C.,
killed November 3rd, 1916*

The wind had blown away the rain
That all day long had soaked the level plain.
Against the horizon's fiery wrack
The sheds loomed black.
And higher, in their tumultuous concourse met,
The streaming clouds, shot-riddled banners, wet
With the flickering storm,
Drifted and smouldered, warm
With flashes sent
From the lower firmament.
And they concealed—
They only here and there through rifts revealed—
A hidden sanctuary of fire and light,
A city of chrysolite.

BOOK SEVEN

We looked and laughed and wondered, and I said:
That orange sea, those oriflammes outspread
Were like the fanciful imaginings
That the young painter flings
Upon the canvas bold,
Such as the sage and the old
Make mock at, saying it could never be;
And you assented also, laughingly.
I wondered what they meant,
That flaming firmament,
Those clouds so gray so gold, so wet so warm,
So much of glory and so much of storm,
The end of the world, or the end
Of the war—remoter still to me and you, my friend.

Alas! it meant not this, it meant not that:
It meant that now the last time you and I
Should look at the golden sky,
And the dark fields large and flat,
And smell the evening weather,
And laugh and talk and wonder both together.
The last, last time. We nevermore should meet
In France or London street,
Or fields of home. The desolated space
Of life shall nevermore
Be what it was before.
No one shall take your place.
No other face
Can fill that empty frame.
There is no answer when we call your name.
We cannot hear your shout upon the stair.
We turn to speak and find a vacant chair.
Something is broken which we cannot mend.
God has done more than take away a friend
In taking you; for all that we have left
Is bruised and irremediably bereft.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

There is none like you. Yet not that alone
Do we bemoan;
But this; that you were greater than the rest,
And better than the best.

O liberal heart fast-rooted to the soil,
O lover of ancient freedom and proud toil,
Friend of the gipsies and all wandering song,
The forest's nursling and the favoured child
Of woodlands wild—
O brother to the birds and all things free,
Captain of liberty!
Deep in your heart the restless seed was sown;
The vagrant spirit fretted in your feet;
We wondered could you tarry long,
And brook for long the cramping street,
Or would you one day sail for shores unknown,
And shake from you the dust of towns, and spurn
The crowded market-place—and not return?
You found a sterner guide;
You heard the guns. Then, to their distant fire,
Your dreams were laid aside;
And on that day, you cast your heart's desire
Upon a burning pyre;
You gave your service to the exalted need,
Until at last from bondage freed,
At liberty to serve as you loved best,
You chose the noblest way. God did the rest.

So when the spring of the world shall shrive our stain,
After the winter of war,
When the poor world awakes to peace once more,
After such night of ravage and of rain,
You shall not come again.
You shall not come to taste the old spring weather,
To gallop through the soft untrampled heather,

BOOK SEVEN

To bathe and bake your body on the grass.
We shall be there; alas,
But not with you. When spring shall wake the earth,
And quicken the scarred fields to the new birth,
Our grief shall grow. For what can spring renew
More fiercely for us than the need of you?

That night I dreamt they sent for me and said
That you were missing. "Missing, missing—dead":
I cried when in the morning I awoke,
And all the world seemed shrouded in a cloak;
But when I saw the sun,
And knew another day had just begun,
I brushed the dream away, and quite forgot
The nightmare's ugly blot.
So was the dream forgot. The dream came true,
Before the night I knew
That you had flown away into the air
For ever. Then I cheated my despair.
I said
That you were safe—or wounded—but not dead.
Alas! I knew
Which was the false and true.

And after days of watching, days of lead,
There came the certain news that you were dead.
You had died fighting, fighting against odds,
Such as in war the gods
Aethereal dared when all the world was young;
Such fighting as blind Homer never sung,
Nor Hector nor Achilles never knew,
High in the empty blue.
High, high, above the clouds, against the setting sun,
The fight was fought, and your great task was done.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Of all your brave adventures this the last
The bravest was and best;
Meet ending to a long embattled past,
This swift, triumphant, fatal quest,
Crowned with the wreath that never perisheth,
And diadem of honourable death;
Swift death aflame with offering supreme
And mighty sacrifice,
More than all mortal dream;
A soaring death, and near to heaven's gate;
Beneath the very walls of Paradise.
Surely with soul elate,
You heard the destined bullet as you flew,
And surely your prophetic spirit knew
That you had well deserved that shining fate.

Here is no waste,
No burning might-have-been,
No bitter after-taste,
None to censure, none to screen,
Nothing awry, nor anything misspent;
Only content, content beyond content,
Which hath not any room for betterment.

God, Who had made you valiant, strong, and swift,
And maimed you with a bullet long ago,
And cleft your riotous ardour with a rift,
And checked your youth's tumultuous overflow,
Gave back your youth to you,
And packed in moments rare and few
Achievements manifold
And happiness untold,
And bade you spring to death as to a bride,
In manhood's ripeness, power, and pride,
And on your sandals the strong wings of youth.
He let you leave a name

BOOK SEVEN

To shine on the entablatures of truth
For ever:
To sound for ever in answering halls of fame.

For you soared onwards to that world which rags
Of clouds, like tattered flags,
Concealed; you reached the walls of chrysolite,
The mansions white;
And losing all, you gained the civic crown
Of that eternal town,
Wherein you passed a rightful citizen
Of the bright commonwealth ablaze beyond our ken.

Surely you found companions meet for you
In that high place;
You met there face to face
Those you had never known, but whom you knew:
Knights of the Table Round,
And all the very brave, the very true,
With chivalry crowned;
The captains rare,
Courteous and brave beyond our human air;
Those who had loved and suffered overmuch,
Now free from the world's touch.
And with them were the friends of yesterday,
Who went before and pointed you the way;
And in that place of freshness, light, and rest,
Where Lancelot and Tristram vigil keep
Over their King's long sleep,
Surely they made a place for you,
Their long-expected guest,
Among the chosen few,
And welcomed you, their brother and their friend,
To that companionship which hath no end.

And in the portals of the sacred hall
You hear the trumpet's call

THE POET'S PROGRESS

At dawn upon the silvery battlement
Re-echo through the deep
And bid the sons of God to rise from sleep,
And with a shout to hail
The sunrise on the city of the Grail:
The music that proud Lucifer in hell
Missed more than all the joys that he forwent.
You hear the solemn bell
At vespers, when the oriflammes are furled;
And then you know that somewhere in the world,
That shines far-off beneath you like a gem,
They think of you, and when you think of them
You know that they will wipe away their tears,
And cast aside their fears;
That they will have it so,
And in no otherwise;
That it is well with them because they know,
With faithful eyes
Fixed forward and turned upwards to the skies,
That it is well with you,
Among the chosen few,
Among the very brave, the very true.

Maurice Baring

318. *To ironfounders and others*

When you destroy a blade of grass
You poison England at her roots:
Remember no man's foot can pass
Where evermore no green life shoots.

You force the birds to wing too high
Where your unnatural vapours creep:
Surely the living rocks shall die
When birds no rightful distance keep,

BOOK SEVEN

You have brought down the firmament
And yet no heaven is more near;
You shape huge deeds without event,
And half-made men believe and fear.

Your worship is your furnaces,
Which, like old idols, lost obscenes,
Have molten bowels; your vision is
Machines for making more machines.

O, you are busied in the night,
Preparing destinies of rust;
Iron misused must turn to blight
And dwindle to a tettered crust.

The grass, forerunner of life, has gone,
But plants that spring in ruins and shards
Attend until your dream is done:
I have seen hemlock in your yards.

The generations of the worm
Know not your loads piled on their soil;
Their knotted ganglions shall wax firm
Till your strong flagstones heave and toil.

When the old hollowed earth is cracked,
And when, to grasp more power and feasts,
Its ores are emptied, wasted, lacked,
The middens of your burning beasts

Shall be raked over till they yield
Last priceless slags for fashionings high,
Ploughs to wake grass in every field,
Chisels men's hands to magnify.

Gordon Bottomley

THE POET'S PROGRESS

319. *The Praise of Dust*

"What of vile dust?" the preacher said.
Methought the whole world woke;
The dead stone lived beneath my feet,
And my whole body spoke.

"You, that play tyrant to the dust
And stamp its wrinkled face,
This patient star that flings you not
Far into homeless space,

"Come down out of your dusty shrine
The living dust to see,
The flowers that at your sermon's end
Stand blazing silently,

"Rich white and blood-red blossom; stones
Lichens like fire encrust;
A gleam of blue, a glare of gold,
The vision of the dust.

"Pass them all by; till, as you come
Where, at a city's edge,
Under a tree,—I know it well—
Under a lattice ledge,

"The sunshine falls on one brown head.
You, too, O cold of clay,
Eater of stones, may haply hear
The trumpets of that day

"When God to all his paladins
By his own splendour swore
To make a fairer face than heaven
Of dust and nothing more."

G. K. Chesterton

BOOK SEVEN

320. *Flannan Isle*

"Though three men dwell on Flannan Isle
To keep the lamp alight,
As we steered under the lee we caught
No glimmer through the night."

A passing ship at dawn had brought
The news; and quickly we set sail,
To find out what strange thing might ail
The keepers of the deep-sea light.

The winter day broke blue and bright,
With glancing sun and glancing spray,
While o'er the swell our boat made way,
As gallant as a gull in flight.

But, as we neared the lonely isle,
And looked up at the naked height,
And saw the lighthouse towering white,
With blinded lantern, that all night
Had never shot a spark
Of comfort through the dark,
So ghostly in the cold sunlight
It seemed, that we were struck the while
With wonder all too dread for words.
And, as into the tiny creek
We stole beneath the hanging crag,
We saw three queer, black, ugly birds—
Too big by far in my belief
For cormorant or shag—
Like seamen sitting bolt-upright
Upon a half-tide reef:
But as we neared they plunged from sight
Without a sound, or spurt of white.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And, still too mazed to speak,
We landed; and made fast the boat;
And climbed the track in single file,
Each wishing he were safe afloat
On any sea, however far,
So it be far from Flannan Isle:
And still we seemed to climb, and climb,
As though we'd lost all count of time,
And so must climb for evermore.
Yet, all too soon, we reached the door—
The black sun-blistered lighthouse door—
That gaped for us ajar.

As on the threshold for a spell
We paused, we seemed to breathe the smell
Of limewash and of tar,
Familiar as our daily breath,
As though 'twere some strange scent of death:
And so, yet wondering, side by side
We stood a moment, still tongue-tied:
And each with black foreboding eyed
The door, ere we should fling it wide,
To leave the sunlight for the gloom:
Till, plucking courage up, at last,
Hard on each other's heels we passed
Into the living-room.

Yet as we crowded through the door
We only saw a table spread
For dinner, meat and cheese and bread;
But all untouched; and no one there;
As though, when they sat down to eat,
Ere they could even taste,
Alarm had come; and they in haste

BOOK SEVEN

Had risen and left the bread and meat;
For at the table-head a chair
Lay tumbled on the floor.

We listened; but we only heard
The feeble chirping of a bird
That starved upon its perch:
And listening still, without a word
We set about our hopeless search.
We hunted high, we hunted low,
And soon ransacked the empty house;
Then o'er the island to and fro
We ranged, to listen and to look
In every cranny, cleft, and nook
That might have hid a bird or mouse;
But, though we searched from shore to shore,
We found no sign in any place;
And soon again stood face to face
Before the gaping door;

And stole into the room once more
As frightened children steal.
Ay; though we hunted high and low,
And hunted everywhere,
Of the three men's fate we found no trace
Of any kind in any place,
But a door ajar, and an untouched meal,
And an overtoppled chair.

And as we listened in the gloom
Of that forsaken living-room,
A chill clutch on our breath,
We thought how ill-chance came to all
Who kept the Flannan light;
And how the rock had been the death
Of many a likely lad:

THE POET'S PROGRESS

How six had come to a sudden end
And three had gone stark mad:
And one whom we'd all known as friend
Had leapt from the lantern one still night,
And fallen dead by the lighthouse wall;
And long we thought
On the three we sought,
And on what might yet befall.

Like curs a glance has brought to heel
We listened, flinching there;
And looked, and looked, on the untouched meal
And the overtopped chair.

We seemed to stand an endless while,
Though still no word was said:
Three men alive on Flannan Isle
Who thought on three men dead.

W. W. Gibson

321. *Fragments*

Troy Town is covered up with weeds;
The rabbits and the pismires brood
On broken gold, and shards, and beads
Where Priam's ancient palace stood.

The floors of many a gallant house
Are matted with the roots of grass;
The glow-worm and the nimble mouse
Among her ruins flit and pass.

And there, in orts of blackened bone
The widowed Trojan beauties lie,
And Simois babbles over stone,
And waps and gurgles to the sky.

BOOK SEVEN

Once there were merry days in Troy,
Her chimneys smoked with cooking meals,
The passing chariots did annoy
The sunning housewives at their wheels.

And many a lovely Trojan maid
Set Trojan lads to lovely things;
The game of life was nobly played,
They played the game like queens and kings,

So that, when Troy had greatly passed
In one red roaring fiery coal,
The courts the Grecians overcast
Became a city of the soul.

In some green island of the sea,
Where now the shadowy coral grows,
In pride and pomp and empery
The courts of old Atlantis rose.

In many a glittering house of glass
The Atlanteans wandered there;
The paleness of their faces was
Like ivory, so pale they were.

And hushed they were; no noise of words
In those bright cities ever rang;
Only their thoughts, like golden birds,
About their chambers thrilled and sang.

They knew all wisdom; for they knew
The souls of those Egyptian kings
Who learned, in ancient Babilu,
The beauty of immortal things,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

They knew all beauty—when they thought
The air chimed like a stricken lyre,
The elemental birds were wrought,
The golden birds became a fire.

And straight to busy camps and marts
The singing flames were swiftly gone;
The trembling leaves of human hearts
Hid boughs for them to perch upon.

And men in desert places, men
. Abandoned, broken, sick with fears,
Rose singing, swung their swords agen,
And laughed and died among the spears.

The green and greedy seas have drowned
That city's glittering walls and towers;
Her sunken minarets are crowned
With red and russet water-flowers;

In towers and rooms and golden courts
The shadowy coral lifts her sprays;
The scrawl hath gorged her broken orts;
The shark doth haunt her hidden ways.

But, at the falling of the tide,
The golden birds still sing and gleam,
The Atlanteans have not died,
Immortal things still give us dream—

The dream that fires man's heart to make,
To build, to do, to sing or say
A beauty death can never take,
An Adam from the crumbled clay.

John Masefield

BOOK SEVEN

322. *Sea Fever*

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and
the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white
sail's shaking,
And a gray mist on the sea's face, and a gray dawn
breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the run-
ning tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds
flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-
gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gipsy
life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way, where the wind's
like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-
rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's
over.

John Masefield

THE POET'S PROGRESS

323. *Laugh and be merry*

Laugh and be merry: remember, better the world with
a song,
Better the world with a blow in the teeth of a wrong.
Laugh, for the time is brief, a thread the length of a span.
Laugh, and be proud to belong to the old proud pageant
of man.

Laugh and be merry: remember, in olden time,
God made heaven and earth for joy He took in a rhyme,
Made them, and filled them full with the strong red wine
of His mirth;
The splendid joy of the stars, the joy of the earth.

So we must laugh and drink from the deep blue cup of
the sky,
Join the jubilant song of the great stars sweeping by,
Laugh, and battle, and work, and drink of the wine
outpoured
In the dear green earth, the sign of the joy of the Lord.

Laugh and be merry together, like brothers akin,
Guesting awhile in the rooms of a beautiful inn,
Glad till the dancing stops, and the lilt of the music
ends.
Laugh till the game is played; and be you merry, my
friends.

John Masefield

BOOK SEVEN

324. *Roundabouts and Swings*

It was early last September nigh to Framlin'am-on-Sea,
An' 'twas Fair-day come to-morrow, an' the time was
after tea,

An' I met a painted caravan adown a dusty lane,
A Pharach with his waggons comin' jolt an' creak an'
strain;

A cheery cove an' sunburnt, bold o' eye and wrinkled up,
An' beside him on the splashboard sat a brindled tarrier
pup,

An' a lurcher wise as Solomon an' lean as fiddle-strings
Was joggin' in the dust along 'is roundabouts an' swings.

"Goo' day" said 'e; "Goo' day" said I; "an' 'ow
d'you find things go?"

An' what's the chance o' millions when you runs a
travellin' show?"

"I find" said 'e "things very much as 'ow I've always
found,

For mostly they goes up and down or else goes round
and round".

Said 'e "The job's the very spit o' what it always were;
It's bread and bacon mostly when the dog don't catch a
'are;

But lookin' at it broad, an' while it ain't no merchant
king's,

What's lost upon the roundabouts we pulls up on the
swings".

"Goo' luck" said 'e; "Goo' luck" said I; "you've
put it past a doubt;

An' keep that lurcher on the road, the gamekeepers is
out".

THE POET'S PROGRESS

'E thumped upon the footboard an' 'e lumbered on again
To meet a gold-dust sunset down the owl-light in the
lane;
An' the moon she climbed the 'azels, while a night-jar
seemed to spin
That Pharaoh's wisdom o'er again, 'is sooth of lose-and-
win;
For "up an' down an' round" said he "goes all
appointed things,
An' losses on the roundabouts means profits on the
swings".

Patrick Chalmers

325. *Milk for the Cat*

When the tea is brought at five o'clock,
And all the neat curtains are drawn with care,
The little black cat with bright green eyes
Is suddenly purring there.

At first she pretends, having nothing to do,
She has come in merely to blink by the grate,
But, though tea may be late or the milk may be sour,
She is never late.

And presently her agate eyes
Take a soft large milky haze,
And her independent casual glance
Becomes a stiff hard gaze.

Then she stamps her claws or lifts her ears,
Or twists her tail and begins to stir,
Till suddenly all her lithe body becomes
One breathing trembling purr.

BOOK SEVEN

The children eat and wriggle and laugh;
The two old ladies stroke their silk:
But the cat is grown small and thin with desire,
Transformed to a creeping lust for milk.

The white saucer like some full moon descends
At last from the clouds of the table above;
She sighs and dreams and thrills and glows,
Transfigured with love.

She nestles over the shining rim,
Buries her chin in the creamy sea;
Her tail hangs loose; each drowsy paw
Is doubled under each bending knee.

A long dim ecstasy holds her life;
Her world is an infinite shapeless white,
Till her tongue has curled the last holy drop;
Then she sinks back into the night,

Draws and dips her body to heap
Her sleepy nerves in the great arm-chair,
Lies defeated and buried deep
Three or four hours unconscious there.

Harold Monro

326. *The Plougher*

Sunset and silence; a man; around him earth savage,
earth broken:

Beside him two horses, a plough.

Earth savage, earth broken, the brutes, the dawn man
there in the sunset;

And the plough that is twin to the sword, that is founder
of cities.

"Brute-tamer, plough-maker, earth-breaker, canst hear?
There are ages between us.

Is it praying you are as you stand there, alone in the
sunset?

"Surely our sky-born gods can be nought to you,
earth-child and earth-master;

Surely your thoughts are of Pan, or of Wotan, or Dana.

"Yet why give thought to the gods? Has Pan led your
brutes where they stumble?

Has Dana numbed pain of the childbed, or Wotan put
hands to your plough?

"What matter your foolish reply? O man, standing lone
and bowed earthward,

Your task is a day near its close. Give thanks to the night-
giving God."

Slowly the darkness falls, the broken lands blend with
the savage;

The brute-tamer stands by the brutes, a head's breadth
only above them.

A head's breadth? Ay, but therein is hell's depth; and
the height up to heaven;

And the thrones of the gods, and their halls, their
chariots, purples, and splendours.

Padraic Colum

BOOK SEVEN

327. *The Buzzards*

When evening came and the warm glow grew deeper,
And every tree that bordered the green meadows,
And in the yellow cornfields every reaper
And every corn-shock stood above their shadows
Flung eastward from their feet in longer measure,
Serenely far there swam in the sunny height
A buzzard and his mate, who took their pleasure
Swirling and poising idly in golden light.
On great pied motionless moth-wings borne along,
So effortless and so strong,
Cutting each other's paths together they glided,
Then wheeled asunder till they soared divided
Two valleys' width (as though it were delight
To part like this, being sure they could unite
So swiftly in their empty free dominion),
Curved headlong downward, towered up the sunny steep,
Then, with a sudden lift of the one great pinion,
Swung proudly to a curve, and from its height
Took half a mile of sunlight in one long sweep.

And we, so small on the swift immense hillside,
Stood tranced, until our souls arose uplifted
On those farsweeping, wide,
Strong curves of flight—swayed up and hugely drifted,
Were washed, made strong and beautiful in the tide
Of sun-bathed air. But far beneath, beholden
Through shining deeps of air, the fields were golden,
And rosy burned the heather where cornfields ended.

And still those buzzards whirled, while light withdrew
Out of the vales and to surging slopes ascended,
Till the loftiest-flaming summit died to blue.

Martin Armstrong

THE POET'S PROGRESS

328. *Clouds*

Because a million voices call
Across the earth distractedly,
Because the thrones of reason fall
And beautiful battalions die,
My mind is like a madrigal
Played on a lute long since put by.

In common use my mind is still
Eager for every lovely thing—
The solitudes of tarn and hill,
Bright birds with honesty to sing,
Bluebells and primroses that spill
Cascades of colour on the spring.

But now my mind that gave to these
Gesture and shape, colour and song,
Goes hesitant and ill at ease,
And the old touch is truant long,
Because the continents and seas
Are loud with lamentable wrong.

John Drinkwater

329. *To a poet a thousand years hence*

I who am dead a thousand years,
And wrote this sweet archaic song,
Send you my words for messengers
The way I shall not pass along.

BOOK SEVEN

I care not if you bridge the seas,
Or ride secure the cruel sky,
Or build consummate palaces
Of metal or of masonry.

But have you wine and music still,
And statues and a bright-eyed love,
And foolish thoughts of good and ill,
And prayers to them that sit above?

How shall we conquer? Like a wind
That falls at eve our fancies blow,
And old Mæonides the blind
Said it three thousand years ago.

O friend unseen, unborn, unknown,
Student of our sweet English tongue,
Read out my words at night, alone:
I was a poet, I was young.

Since I can never see your face,
And never shake you by the hand,
I send my soul through time and space
To greet you. You will understand.

J. E. Flecker

330. *Brumana*

Oh shall I never be home again?
Meadows of England shining in the rain,
Spread wide your daisied lawns: your ramparts green
With briar fortify, with blossom screen
Till my far morning—and O streams that slow
And pure and deep through plains and playlands go,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

For me your love and all your kingcups store,
And—dark militia of the southern shore,
Old fragrant friends—preserve me the last lines
Of that long saga which you sang me, pines,
When, lonely boy, beneath the chosen tree
I listened, with my eyes upon the sea.

O traitor pines, you sang what life has found
The falsest of fair tales.
Earth blew a far-horn prelude all around,
That native music of her forest home,
While from the sea's blue fields and syren dales
Shadows and light noon spectres of the foam
Riding the summer gales
On aery viols plucked an idle sound.

Hearing you sing, O trees,
Hearing you murmur "There are older seas,
That beat on vaster sands,
Where the wise snailfish move their pearly towers
To carven rocks and sculptured promont'ries",
Hearing you whisper "Lands
Where blaze the unimaginable flowers."

Beneath me in the valley waves the palm;
Beneath, beyond the valley, breaks the sea;
Beneath me sleep in mist and light and calm
Cities of Lebanon, dream-shadow-dim,
Where kings of Tyre and kings of Tyre did rule
In ancient days in endless dynasty,
And all around the snowy mountains swim
Like mighty swans afloat in heaven's pool.

BOOK SEVEN

But I will walk upon the wooded hill
Where stands a grove, O pines, of sister pines,
And when the downy twilight droops her wing
And no sea glimmers and no mountain shines
My heart shall listen still.
For pines are gossip pines the wide world through
And full of runic tales to sigh or sing.
'Tis ever sweet through pines to see the sky
Blushing a deeper gold or darker blue.
'Tis ever sweet to lie
On the dry carpet of the needles brown,
And though the fanciful green lizard stir
And windy odours light as thistledown
Breathe from the lavdanon and lavender,
Half to forget the wandering and pain,
Half to remember days that have gone by,
And dream and dream that I am home again.

J. E. Flecker

331. *The war song of the Saracens*

We are they who come faster than fate: we are they
who ride early or late:
We storm at your ivory gate: Pale Kings of the Sunset,
beware!
Not on silk nor in samet we lie, not in curtained solemnity die
Among women who chatter and cry, and children who
mumble a prayer.
But we sleep by the ropes of the camp, and we rise
with a shout, and we tramp
With the sun or the moon for a lamp, and the spray
of the wind in our hair.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

From the lands where the elephants are to the forts of
Merou and Balghar,
Our steel we have brought and our star to shine on
the ruins of Rum.
We have marched from the Indus to Spain, and by God
we will go there again;
We have stood on the shore of the plain where the
Waters of Destiny boom.
A mart of destruction we made at Jalula where men
were afraid,
For death was a difficult trade, and the sword was a
broker of doom;

And the spear was a desert physician who cured not a
few of ambition,
And drave not a few to perdition with medicine bitter
and strong;
And the shield was a grief to the fool and as bright as
a desolate pool,
And as straight as the rock of Stamboul when their
cavalry thundered along:
For the coward was drowned with the brave when our
battle sheered up like a wave,
And the dead to the desert we gave, and the glory to
God in our song.

J. E. Flecker

BOOK SEVEN

332. *The Lily of Malud*

The lily of Malud is born in secret mud.
It is breathed like a word in a little dark ravine
Where no bird was ever heard and no beast was ever
seen,
And the leaves are never stirred by the panther's velvet
sheen.

It blooms once a year in summer moonlight,
In a valley of dark fear full of pale moonlight:
It blooms once a year, and dies in a night,
And its petals disappear with the dawn's first light;
And when that night has come, black small-breasted
maids,
With ecstatic terror dumb, steal fawn-like through the
shades
To watch, hour by hour, the unfolding of the flower.

When the world is full of night, and the moon reigns
alone,
And drowns in silver light the known and the unknown,
When each hut is a mound, half blue-silver and half
black,
And casts upon the ground the hard shadow of its back,
When the winds are out of hearing and the tree-tops never
shake,
When the grass in the clearing is silent but awake
'Neath a moon-paven sky; all the village is asleep
And the babes that nightly cry dream deep:

From the doors the maidens creep,
Tiptoe over dreaming curs, soft so soft, that no one stirs,
And stand curved and a-quiver, like bathers by a river,
Looking at the forest wall, groups of slender naked girls,
Whose black bodies shine like pearls where the moon-
beams fall.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

They have waked, they know not why, at a summons
from the night,

They have stolen fitfully from the dark to the light,
Stepping over sleeping men, who have moved and slept
again:

And they know not why they go to the forest, but they
know,

As their moth-feet pass to the shore of the grass,
And the forest's dreadful brink, that their tender spirits
shrink:

They would flee, but cannot turn, for their eyelids burn
With still frenzy; and each maid, as she leaves the moon-
lit space,

If she sees another's face is thrilled and afraid.

Now like little phantom fawns they tread the outer
lawns

Where the boles of giant trees stand about in twos and
threes,

Till the forest grows more dense and the darkness more
intense,

And they only sometimes see in a lone moon-ray

A dead and spongy trunk in the earth half-sunk,

Or the roots of a tree with fungus gray,

Or a drift of muddy leaves, or a banded snake that
heaves.

And the towering unseen roof grows more intricate, and
soon

It is featureless and proof to the lost forgotten moon.

But they could not look above as with blind-drawn feet
they move

Onwards on the scarce-felt path, with quick and des-
perate breath,

For their circling fingers dread to caress some slimy
head,

Or to touch the icy shape of a hunched and hairy ape,

BOOK SEVEN

And at every step they fear in their very midst to hear
A lion's rending roar or a tiger's snore. . . .
And when things swish or fall, they shiver but dare not
call.

O what is it leads the way that they do not stray?
What unimagined arm keeps their bodies from harm?
What presence concealed lifts their little feet that yield
Over dry ground and wet till their straining eyes are met
With a thinning in the darkness?
And the foremost faintly cries in awed surprise:
And they one by one emerge from the gloom to the verge
Of a small sunken vale full of moonlight pale.
And they hang along the bank, clinging to the branches
dank,
A shadowy festoon out of sight of the moon;
And they see in front of them, rising from the mud,
A single straight stem and a single pallid bud
In that little lake of light from the moon's calm height.

A stem, a ghostly bud, on the moon-swept mud
That shimmers like a pond; and over there beyond
The guardian forest high, menacing and strange,
Invades the empty sky with its wild black range.

And they watch hour by hour that small lonely flower
In that deep forest place that hunter never found.

It shines without sound, as a star in space.

And the silence all around that solitary place
Is like silence in a dream; till a sudden flashing gleam
Down their dark faces flies; and their lips fall apart,
And their glimmering great eyes without excitement dart;
And their fingers, clutching the branches they were
touching,
Shake and arouse hissing leaves on the boughs.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And they whisper asworn: Did it move in the moon?

O it moved as it grew!

It is moving, opening, with calm and gradual will,
And their bodies where they cling are shadowed and
still,

And with marvel they mark that the mud now is dark;
For the unfolding flower, like a goddess in her power,
Challenges the moon with a light of her own,
That lovelily grows as the petals uncloze,
Wider, more wide with an awful inward pride
Till the heart of it breaks and stilled is their breath;
For the radiance it makes is as wonderful as death.

The morning's last stain tinges their ashen brows
As they part the last boughs and slowly step again
On to the village grass, and chill and languid pass
Into the huts to sleep.

Brief slumber, yet so deep

That, when they wake to-day, darkness and splendour
seem

Broken and far-away, a faint miraculous dream;
And when those maidens rise they are as they ever
were

Save only for a rare shade of trouble in their eyes;
And the surly thick-lipped men, as they sit about their
huts

Making drums out of guts, grunting gruffly now and
then,

Carving sticks of ivory, stretching shields of wrinkled
skin,

Smoothing sinister and thin squatting gods of ebony,
Chip and grunt and do not see.

But each mother, silently,

Longer than her wont stays shut in the dimness of her
hut,

BOOK SEVEN

For she feels a brooding cloud of memory in the air,
A lingering thing there that makes her sit bowed
With hollow shining eyes, as the night-fire dies,
And stare softly at the ember, and try to remember,
Something sorrowful and far, something sweet and
vaguely seen

Like an early evening star when the sky is pale green:
A quiet silver tower that climbed in an hour,
Or a ghost like a flower, or a flower like a queen:
Something holy in the past that came and did not
last. . . .

But she knows not what it was.

Sir John Squire

333. *The Discovery*

There was an Indian, who had known no change,
Who strayed content along a sunlit beach
Gathering shells. He heard a strange
Commingle noise; looked up; and gasped for speech.
For in the bay, where nothing was before,
Moved on the sea, by magic, huge canoes
With bellying cloths on poles, and not one oar,
And fluttering coloured signs, and clambering crews.
And he, in fear, this naked man alone,
His fallen hands forgetting all their shells,
His lips gone pale, knelt low behind a stone,
And stared, and saw, and did not understand,
Columbus's doom-burdened caravels
Slant to the shore, and all their seamen land.

Sir John Squire

334. *The Swans*

In the green light of water, like the day
 Under green boughs, the spray
 And air-pale petals of the foam seem flowers,—
 Dark-leaved arbutus blooms with wax-pale bells
 And their faint honey-smells,
 The velvety syringe with smooth leaves,
 Gloxinia with a green shade in the snow,
 Jasmine and moon-clear orange-blossom and green
 blooms
 Of the wild strawberries from the shade of woods.
 Their showers
 Pelt the white women under the trees,
 Venusia, Cosmopolita, Pistillarine—
 White solar statues, white rose-trees in snow
 Flowering for ever, child-women, half stars
 Half flowers, waves of the sea, born of a dream.

Their laughter flying through the trees like doves,
 These angels come to watch their whiter ghosts
 In the air-pale water, archipelagoes
 Of stars and young thin moons from great wings falling
 As ripples widen.
 These are their ghosts, their own white angels these.
 O great wings spreading—
 Your bones are made of amber, smooth and thin
 Grown from the amber dust that was a rose
 Or nymph in swan-smooth waters.

 But Time's winter falls
 With snows as soft, as soundless. . . . Then, who knows
 Rose-footed swan from snow, or girl from rose?

Edith Sitwell

BOOK SEVEN

335. *How many heavens*

The emeralds are singing on the grasses
And in the trees the bells of the long cold are ringing.
My blood seems changed to emeralds like the spears
Of grass beneath the earth piercing and singing.

The flame of the first blade
Is an angel piercing through the earth to sing
"God is everything:—
The grass within the grass, the angel in the angel, flame
Within the flame; and He is the green shade that came
To be the heart of shade."

The gray-beard angel of the stone,
Who has grown wise with age, cried "Not alone
Am I within my silence. God is the stone in the still
stone, the silence laid
In the heart of silence." . . . Then, above the glade

The yellow straws of light
Whereof the sun has built his nest, cry "Bright
Is the world, the yellow straw
My brother. God is the straw within the straw.
All things are Light."

He is the sea of ripeness and the sweet apple's emerald
lore.

O you, my hawthorn bough of the stars, bending low
Through the day, for your flowers to kiss my lips, shall
know

He is the core of the heart of love, and He, beyond
labouring seas, our ultimate shore.

Edith Sitwell

THE POET'S PROGRESS

336. *Heart and Mind*

Said the Lion to the Lioness "When you are amber
dust,—
No more a raging fire like the heat of the sun
(No liking but all lust),—
Remember still the flowering of the amber blood and
bone,
The rippling of bright muscles like the sea;
Remember the rose-prickles of bright paws,
Though we shall mate no more
Till the fire of that sun the heart and the moon-cold
bone are one."

Said the Skeleton lying upon the sands of Time
"The great gold planet that is the morning heat of the
sun
Is greater than all gold, more powerful
Than the tawny body of a lion that fire consumes
Like all that grows or leaps. . . . So is the heart
More powerful than all dust. Once I was Hercules
Or Samson, strong as the pillars of the seas:
But the flames of the heart consumed me, and the mind
Is but a foolish wind."

Said the Sun to the Moon "When you are but a lonely
white crone,
And I a dark King in my golden armour somewhere in
a dark wood,
Remember only this of our hopeless love
That never till Time is done
Will the fire of the heart and the fire of the mind be
one.'

Edith Sitwell

BOOK SEVEN

337. *Most lovely Shade*

Most lovely Dark, my Æthiopia born
Of the shade's richest splendour, leave not me
Where in the pomp and splendour of the shade
The dark air's leafy plumes no more a lulling music
made.

Dark is your fleece, and dark the airs that grew
Amid those weeping leaves.
Plantations of the East drop precious dew,
That, ripened by the light, rich leaves perspire.
Such are the drops that from the dark airs' feathers flew.

Most lovely Shade. . . . Syrinx and Dryope
And that smooth nymph that changed into a tree
Are dead. . . . The shade, that Æthiopia, sees
Their beauty make more bright its treasures;
Their amber blood in porphyry veins still grows
Deep in the dark secret of the rose
And the smooth stem of many a weeping tree,
And in your beauty grows.

Come then, my pomp and splendour of the shade,
Most lovely cloud, that the hot sun made black
As dark-leaved airs,—

Come then, O precious cloud,
Lean to my heart: no shade of a rich tree
Shall pour such splendour as your heart to me.

Edith Sitwell

THE POET'S PROGRESS

338. *Egypt's might is tumbled down*

Egypt's might is tumbled down,
Down a-down the steep of thought,
Greece is fallen and Troy town,
Glorious Rome hath lost her crown,
Venice' pride is nought.

But the dreams their children dreamed,
Fleeting, unsubstantial, vain,
Shadowy as the shadows seemed—
Airy nothing, so they deemed;—
These remain.

M. E. Coleridge

339. *Snake*

A snake came to my water trough
On a hot, hot day, and I in pyjamas for the heat,
To drink there.

In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great dark
carob-tree

I came down the steps with my pitcher
And must wait, must stand and wait; for there he was
at the trough before me.

He reached down from a fissure in the earth-wall in the
gloom

And trailed his yellow-brown slackness soft-bellied down,
over the edge of the stone trough,

And rested his throat upon the stone bottom,
And where the water had dripped from the tap, in a
small clearness,

He sipped with his straight mouth,
Softly drank through his straight gums, into his long
slack body,
Silently.

BOOK SEVEN

Someone was before me at the water-trough,
And I, like a second comer, waiting.

He lifted his head from his drinking, as cattle do,
And looked at me vaguely, as drinking cattle do,
And flickered his two-forked tongue from his lips, and
mused a moment,
And stooped and drank a little more,
Being earth brown, earth golden from the burning
burning bowels of the earth,
On the day of Sicilian July, with Etna smoking.

The voice of my education said to me:
He must be killed,
For in Sicily the black, black snakes are innocent, the
gold are venomous.

And voices in me said: If you were a man
You would take a stick and break him now, and finish
him off.

But I must confess how I liked him,
How glad I was he had come like a guest in quiet, to
drink at my water trough
And depart peaceful, pacified, and thankless,
Into the burning bowels of the earth.

Was it cowardice that I dared not kill him?
Was it perversity, that I longed to talk to him?
Was it humility, to feel so honoured?
I felt so honoured.

And yet those voices:
If you were not afraid, you would kill him,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And truly I was afraid, most afraid;
But even so, honoured still more
That he should seek my hospitality
From out the dark door of the secret earth.

He drank enough
And lifted his head, dreamily, as one who has drunken,
And flickered his tongue like a forked night on the air,
 so black,
Seeming to lick his lips,
And looked around like a god, unseeing, into the air,
And slowly turned his head,
And slowly, very slowly, as if thrice adream,
Proceeded to draw his slow length curving round
And climb again the broken bank of my wall face.
And as he put his head into that dreadful hole,
And as he slowly drew up, snake-easing his shoulders,
 and entered farther,
A sort of horror, a sort of protest against his withdrawing
 into that horrid black hole,
Deliberately going into the blackness and slowly drawing
 himself after,
Overcame me now his back was turned.

I looked round, I put down my pitcher,
I picked up a clumsy log
And threw it at the water-trough with a clatter.

I think it did not hit him,
But suddenly that part of him that was left behind convulsed in undignified haste,
Writhed like lightning and was gone
Into the black hole, the earth-lipped fissure in the wall
 front,
At which, in the intense still noon, I stared with fascination.

BOOK SEVEN

And immediately I regretted it.
I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act!
I despised myself and the voices of my accursed human
education.

And I thought of the albatross,
And I wished he would come back, my snake.

For he seemed to me again like a king,
Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the under-world,
Now due to be crowned again.

And so I missed my chance with one of the lords
Of life.
And I have something to expiate;
A pettiness.

D. H. Lawrence

340. *Everyone sang*

Everyone suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark green fields; on; on; and out of
sight.
Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted,
And beauty came like the setting sun.
My heart was shaken with tears, and horror
Drifted away. . . . O, but every one
Was a bird; and the song was wordless; the singing
will never be done.

Siegfried Sassoon

THE POET'S PROGRESS

341. *The Old Vicarage, Grantchester*

Café des Westens, Berlin

Just now the lilac is in bloom,
All before my little room;
And in my flower-beds, I think,
Smile the carnation and the pink;
And down the borders, well I know,
The poppy and the pansy blow. . . .
Oh! there the chestnuts, summer through,
Beside the river make for you
A tunnel of green gloom, and sleep
Deeply above; and green and deep
The stream mysterious glides beneath,
Green as a dream and deep as death.—
Oh, damn! I know it! and I know
How the May fields all golden show,
And when the day is young and sweet,
Gild gloriously the bare feet
That run to bathe . . .

Du lieber Gott!

Here am I, sweating, sick, and hot,
And there the shadowed waters fresh
Lean up to embrace the naked flesh.
Temperamentvoll German Jews
Drink beer around; and *there* the dews
Are soft beneath a morn of gold.
Here tulips bloom as they are told;
Unkempt about those hedges blows
An English unofficial rose;
And there the unregulated sun
Slopes down to rest when day is done,

BOOK SEVEN

And wakes a vague unpunctual star,
A slippered Hesper; and there are
Meads towards Haslingfield and Coton
Where *das Betreten's* not *verboten*. . . .

εἴθε γένοιμην . . . would I were
In Grantchester, in Grantchester!—
Some, it may be, can get in touch
With nature there, or earth, or such.
And clever modern men have seen
A Faun a-peeping through the green,
And felt the Classics were not dead,
To glimpse a Naiad's reedy head,
Or hear the Goat-foot piping low . . .
But these are things I do not know.
I only know that you may lie
Day long and watch the Cambridge sky,
And, flower-lulled in sleepy grass,
Hear the cool lapse of hours pass,
Until the centuries blend and blur
In Grantchester, in Grantchester. . . .
Still in the dawnlit waters cool
His ghostly lordship swims his pool,
And tries the strokes, essays the tricks,
Long learnt on Hellespont, or Styx;
Dan Chaucer hears his river still
Chatter beneath a phantom mill;
Tennyson notes, with studious eye,
How Cambridge waters hurry by . . .
And in that garden, black and white,
Creep whispers through the grass all night;
And spectral dance, before the dawn,
A hundred Vicars down the lawn;
Curates, long dust, will come and go
On lissom, clerical, printless toe;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And oft between the boughs is seen
The sly shade of a Rural Dean . . .
Till, at a shiver in the skies,
Vanishing with Satanic cries,
The prim ecclesiastic rout
Leaves but a startled sleeper-out,
Gray heavens, the first bird's drowsy calls,
The falling house that never falls.

God! I will pack, and take a train,
And get me to England once again!
For England's the one land, I know,
Where men with splendid hearts may go;
And Cambridgeshire, of all England,
The shire for men who understand;
And of *that* district I prefer
The lovely hamlet Grantchester.
For Cambridge people rarely smile,
Being urban, squat, and packed with guile;
And Royston men in the far south,
Are black and fierce and strange of mouth;
At Over they fling oaths at one,
And worse than oaths at Trumpington;
And Ditton girls are mean and dirty,
And there's none in Harston under thirty;
And folks in Shelford and those parts,
Have twisted lips and twisted hearts;
And Barton men make cockney rhymes,
And Coton's full of nameless crimes;
And things are done you'd not believe
At Madingley on Christmas Eve;
Strong men have run for miles and miles
When one from Cherry Hinton smiles;
Strong men have blanched and shot their wives
Rather than send them to St. Ives;

BOOK SEVEN

Strong men have cried like babes, bydam,
To hear what happened at Babraham.
But Grantchester! ah, Grantchester!
There's peace and holy quiet there,
Great clouds along pacific skies,
And men and women with straight eyes,
Lithe children lovelier than a dream,
A bosky wood, a slumbrous stream,
And little kindly winds that creep
Round twilight corners, half asleep.
In Grantchester their skins are white,
They bathe by day, they bathe by night;
The women there do all they ought;
The men observe the rules of thought.
They love the good; they worship truth;
They laugh uproariously in youth;
(And when they get to feeling old,
They up and shoot themselves, I'm told) . . .

Ah God! to see the branches stir
Across the moon at Grantchester!
To smell the thrilling-sweet and rotten,
Unforgettable, unforgotten
River smell, and hear the breeze
Sobbing in the little trees.
Say, do the elm-clumps greatly stand,
Still guardians of that holy land?
The chestnuts shade, in reverend dream,
The yet unacademic stream?
Is dawn a secret shy and cold
Anadyomene, silver-gold?
And sunset still a golden sea
From Haslingfield to Madingley?
And after, ere the night is born,
Do hares come out about the corn?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Oh, is the water sweet and cool,
Gentle and brown, above the pool?
And laughs the immortal river still
Under the mill, under the mill?
Say, is there Beauty yet to find?
And Certainty? and Quiet kind?
Deep meadows yet, for to forget
The lies, and truths, and pain? . . . oh! yet
Stands the church clock at ten to three?
And is there honey still for tea?

Rupert Brooke

342. *The Soldier*

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke

BOOK SEVEN

343. *The Fish*

In a cool curving world he lies
And ripples with dark ecstasies.
The kind luxurious lapse and steal
Shapes all his universe to feel
And know and be; the clinging stream
Closes his memory, glooms his dream,
Who lips the roots o' the shore, and glides
Superb on unreturning tides.
Those silent waters weave for him
A fluctuant mutable world and dim,
Where wavering masses bulge and gape
Mysterious, and shape to shape
Dies momentarily through whorl and hollow,
And form and line and solid follow
Solid and line and form to dream
Fantastic down the eternal stream;
An obscure world, a shifting world,
Bulbous, or pulled to thin, or curled,
Or serpentine, or driving arrows,
Or serene slidings, or March narrows.
There slipping wave and shore are one,
And weed and mud. No ray of sun,
But glow to glow fades down the deep
(As dream to unknown dream in sleep);
Shaken translucency illumines
The hyaline of shifting glooms;
The strange soft-handed depth subdues
Drowned colour there, but black to hues,
As death to living, decomposes—
Red darkness of the heart of roses,
Blue brilliant from dead starless skies,
And gold that lies behind the eyes,
The unknown unnameable sightless white
That is the essential flame of night,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Lustreless purple, hooded green,
The myriad hues that lie between
Darkness and darkness. . . .

And all's one,
Gentle, embracing, quiet, dun,
The world he rests in, world he knows,
Perpetual curving. Only—grows
An eddy in that ordered falling,
A knowledge from the gloom, a calling
Weed in the wave, gleam in the mud—
The dark fire leaps along his blood;
Dateless and deathless, blind and still,
The intricate impulse works its will;
His woven world drops back, and he,
Sans providence, sans memory,
Unconscious and directly driven,
Falls to some dank sufficient heaven.

O world of lips, O world of laughter,
Where hope is fleet and thought flies after,
Of lights in the clear night, of cries
That drift along the wave, and rise
Thin to the glittering stars above,
You know the hands, the eyes of love.
The strife of limbs, the sightless clinging,
The infinite distance, and the singing
Blown by the wind, a flame of sound,
The gleam, the flowers, and vast around
The horizon, and the heights above—
You know the sigh, the song of love.

But there the night is close, and there
Darkness is cold and strange and bare;
And the secret deeps are whisperless;
And rhythm is all deliciousness;
And joy is on the throbbing tide,
Whose intricate fingers beat and glide

BOOK SEVEN

In felt bewildering harmonies
Of trembling touch; and music is
The exquisite knocking of the blood;
Space is no more, under the mud;
His bliss is older than the sun;
Silent and straight the waters run;
The lights, the cries, the willows dim,
And the dark tide are one with him.

Rupert Brooke

344. *Preludes*

The winter evening settles down
With smell of steak in passage-ways.
Six o'clock.
The burnt-out ends of smoky days.
And now a gusty shower wraps
The grimy scraps
Of withered leaves about your feet
And newspapers from vacant lots;
The showers beat
On broken blinds and chimney-pots,
And at the corner of the street
A lonely cabhorse steams and stamps.
And then the lighting of the lamps.

The morning comes to consciousness
Of faint stale smells of beer
From the sawdust-trampled street
With all its muddy feet that press
To early coffee-stands.
With the other masquerades
That time resumes,
One thinks of all the hands
That are raising dingy shades
In a thousand furnished rooms.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

You tossed a blanket on the bed,
You lay upon your back and waited;
You dozed, and watched the night revealing
The thousand sordid images
Of which your soul was constituted;
They flickered against the ceiling.
And when all the world came back
And the light crept up between the shutters,
And you heard the sparrows in the gutters,
You had such a vision of the street
As the street hardly understands;
Sitting along the bed's edge, where
You curled the papers from your hair,
Or clasped the soles of yellow feet
In the palms of both soiled hands.

His soul stretched tight across the skies
That fade behind a city block,
Or trampled by insistent feet
At four and five and six o'clock;
And short square fingers stuffing pipes,
And evening newspapers, and eyes
Assured of certain certainties,
The conscience of a blackened street
Impatient to assume the world.

I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing.

Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh;
The worlds revolve like ancient women
Gathering fuel in vacant lots.

T. S. Eliot

BOOK SEVEN

345. *Chorus from "Murder in the
Cathedral"*

Does the bird sing in the south?
Only the sea-bird cries, driven inland by the storm.

What sign of the spring of the year?
Only the death of the old: not a stir, not a shoot; not
a breath.

Do the days begin to lengthen?
Longer and darker the day, shorter and colder the night.
Still and stifling the air; but a wind is stored up in
the east.
The starved crow sits in the field, attentive; and in the
wood
The owl rehearses the hollow note of death.

What signs of a bitter spring?
The wind stored up in the east.

What, at the time of the birth of our Lord, at Christmas-
tide,
Is there not peace upon earth, goodwill among men?
The peace of this world is always uncertain, unless men
keep the peace of God.
And war among men defiles the world, but death in the
Lord renews it;
And the world must be cleaned in winter, or we shall
have only
A sour spring, a parched summer, an empty harvest.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Between Christmas and Easter what work shall be done?
The ploughman shall go out in March and turn the same
earth
He has turned before, the bird shall sing the same song.

When the leaf is out on the tree, when the elder and may
Burst over the stream, and the air is clear and high,
And voices trill at windows, and children tumble in
front of the door,
What work shall have been done, what wrong
Shall the bird's song cover, the green tree cover, what
wrong
Shall the fresh earth cover? We wait, and the time is
short.
But waiting is long.

T. S. Eliot

346. *Macavity: the Mystery Cat*

Macavity's a Mystery Cat: he's called the Hidden Paw—
For he's the master criminal who can defy the Law.
He's the bafflement of Scotland Yard, the Flying Squad's
despair:
For when they reach the scene of crime—*Macavity's not
there!*

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity;
He's broken every human law; he breaks the law of
gravity,
His powers of levitation would make a fakir stare;
And when you reach the scene of crime—*Macavity's not
there!*

BOOK SEVEN

You may seek him in the basement, you may look up
in the air—

But I tell you once and once again, *Macavity's not there!*

Macavity's a ginger cat, he's very tall and thin;

You would know him if you saw him, for his eyes are
sunken in.

His brow is deeply lined with thought, his head is highly
domed;

His coat is dusty from neglect, his whiskers are un-
combed.

He sways his head from side to side, with movements
like a snake;

And when you think he's half asleep, he's always wide
awake.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
For he's a fiend in feline shape, a monster of de-
pravity.

You may meet him in a by-street, you may see him in
the square—

But when a crime's discovered, then *Macavity's not
there!*

He's outwardly respectable. (They say he cheats at
cards.)

And his footprints are not found in any file of Scotland
Yard's.

And when the larder's looted, or the jewel-case is
rifled,

Or when the milk is missing, or another Peke's been
stifled,

Or the greenhouse glass is broken, and the trellis past
repair—

Ay, there's the wonder of the thing! *Macavity's not
there!*

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And when the Foreign Office find a Treaty's gone astray,
Or the Admiralty lose some plans and drawings by the
way,

There may be a scrap of paper in the hall or on the
stair—

But it's useless to investigate—*Macavity's not there!*

And when the loss has been disclosed, the Secret Service
say:

"It *must* have been Macavity"—but he's a mile away.

You'll be sure to find him resting, or a-licking of his
thumbs,

Or engaged in doing complicated long division sums.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity;
There never was a Cat of such deceitfulness and suavity;
He always has an alibi, and one or two to spare:

At whatever time the deed took place—MACAVITY
WASN'T THERE!

And they say that all the Cats whose wicked deeds are
widely known

(I might mention Mungojerrie, I might mention Griddle-
bone)

Are nothing more than agents for the Cat who all the
time

Just controls their operations; the Napoleon of Crime!

T. S. Eliot

BOOK SEVEN

347. *Into Battle*

The naked earth is warm with spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze;
And life is colour and warmth and light,
And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight;
And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star, and the Sisters Seven,
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
They stand to him each one a friend;
They gently speak in the windy weather;
They guide to valley and ridge's end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The blackbird sings to him " Brother, brother,
If this be the last song you shall sing,
Sing well, for you may not sing another;
Brother, sing ".

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,
Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers;
O patient eyes, courageous hearts!

And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And only joy of battle takes
Him by the throat, and makes him blind,

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air death moans and sings;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

Julian Grenfell

BOOK SEVEN

348. *In the caves of Auvergne*

He carved the red deer and the bull
Upon the smooth cave rock;
Returned from war with belly full,
And scarred with many a knock,
He carved the red deer and the bull
Upon the smooth cave rock.

The stars flew by the cave's wide door,
The clouds wild trumpets blew,
Trees rose in wild dreams from the floor,
Flowers with dream faces grew
Up to the sky, and softly hung
Golden and white and blue.

The woman ground her heap of corn,
Her heart a guarded fire;
The wind played in his trembling soul
Like a hand upon a lyre,
The wind drew faintly on the stone
Symbols of his desire:

The red deer of the forest dark,
Whose antlers cut the sky,
That vanishes into the mirk
And like a dream flits by,
And by an arrow slain at last
Is but the wind's dark body.

The bull that stands in marshy lakes
As motionless and still
As a dark rock jutting from a plain
Without a tree or hill;
The bull that is the sign of life,
Its sombre, phallic will.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And from the dead, white eyes of them
The wind springs up anew,
It blows upon the trembling heart,
And bull and deer renew
Their flitting life in the dim past
When that dead hunter drew.

I sit beside him in the night,
And, fingering his red stone,
I chase through endless forests dark
Seeking that thing unknown,
That which is not red deer or bull,
But which by them was shown:

By those stiff shapes in which he drew
His soul's exalted cry,
When flying down the forest dark
He slew and knew not why,
When he was filled with song, and strength
Flowed to him from the sky.

The wind blows from red deer and bull,
The clouds wild trumpets blare,
Trees rise in wild dreams from the earth,
Flowers with dream-faces stare;
*O hunter, your own shadow stands
Within your forest lair!*

W. J. Turner

BOOK SEVEN

349. *I have a rendezvous with Death*

1916

I have a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When spring comes back with rustling shade,
And apple-blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with Death
When spring brings back blue days and fair.

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath—
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear. . . .
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When spring trips north again this year;
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Alan Seeger

THE POET'S PROGRESS

350. *The Shell*

And then I pressed the shell
Close to my ear
And listened well.
And straightway like a bell
Came low and clear
The slow, sad murmur of far distant seas
Whipped by an icy breeze
Upon a shore
Wind-swept and desolate.
It was a sunless strand that never bore
The footprint of a man,
Nor felt the weight
Since time began
Of any human quality or stir
Save what the dreary winds and waves incur.
And in the hush of waters was the sound
Of pebbles rolling round;
For ever rolling with a hollow sound:
And bubbling sea-weeds as the waters go
Swish to and fro
Their long cold tentacles of shiny gray:
There was no day,
Nor ever came a night
Setting the stars alight
To wonder at the moon:
Was twilight only, and the frightened croon,
Smitten to whimpers, of the dreary wind
And waves that journeyed blind. . . .
And then I loosed my ear—O, it was sweet
To hear a cart go jolting down the street.

James Stephens

BOOK SEVEN

351. *The Uncommon Man*

The feathers in a fan
are not so frail as man;
the green embossed leaf
than man is no more brief.
His life is not so loud
as the passing of a cloud;
his death is quieter
than harebells, when they stir.
The years that have no form
and substance are as warm,
and space has hardly less
supreme an emptiness.
And yet man being frail
does on himself prevail,
and with a single thought
can bring the world to nought,
as being brief he still
bends to his fleeting will
all time, and makes of it
the shadow of his wit.
Soundless in life and death
although he vanisheth
the echo of a song
makes all the stars a gong.
Cold, void, and yet the grim
darkness is hot with him,
and space is but the span
of that long love of man.

Humbert Wolfe

THE POET'S PROGRESS

352. *The Fiddle and the Bow*

This is what the fiddle said to the bow:

“ No! oh no!

You should have warned me before the touch
of music that it hurt too much.

“ You should have warned me, you should have told me,
before you let the music hold me,
how this poor world were fain to melt
into the beauty it has felt.

“ How for one breathless note it trembles
almost on the edge of flame, then tumbles,
wounded with the sense of mortal things,
down down down down with broken wings.

“ It was not right to wound and wake me.
Give me my silence back, or take me
wholly, and never let me go ”.
This is what the fiddle said to the bow.

But the bow said “ How shall I guess
what bids me answer ‘ Yes, oh yes ’,
since a greater thing than we are thus
for its blind purpose useth us?

“ We did not choose our way of making,
not sleeping ours to choose, or waking,
not ours the starry stroke of sound
to choose or fly, though ours the wound.

“ Though dead wood cry ‘ How shall I dare it?’
and wood reply ‘ I cannot bear it ’,
yet his alone to choose, whose fingers
take the dead wood, and make his singers.

BOOK SEVEN

"And if of dust he shapes this brittle
life of the wings, this song's one petal
that shines and dies, is it not just
to suffer for song, O singing dust?"

"His was the choice, and if he wake us
out of the wood, but will not slake us,
thus stirred with the stars, at least we know
what pain the stars have" says the bow.

Humbert Wolfe

353. *The Losers*

The soft dust on the by-roads
Is shaken and stirred
By the shuffling feet of a listless folk;
But no sound is heard,
For they slouch along a tired trail
With never a song or word.

The days they walked the high road,
With its sun, dust, and sweat,
Its hope and its pride, are a dim dream
That they will soon forget.
All for the fields of slumber
Their feet are set.

But, as they slouch on drowsily,
They shall quiet joys find—
Boots without heels, jars without jam,
And gnawed cheese-rind,
And pilchard-tins, with one or two
Fish-tails left behind.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And glad they are to have left climbing
The difficult way—
Glad no more to sweat and strive,
No more obey;
Yea, all but glad the goal was not
For such as they.

(Lost souls, they say, from Michael's gate
Turn back in such wise.
Forgetful of the ecstasy
Of the strange, steep skies,
Down popped paths to the silent lands
They slope, with blind eyes.)

Peace waits to take them utterly
For a little space;
They must go shambling down the hill
To the dim, still place,
Where, stretched at ease, they shall forget
They have run and lost a race.

* * *

The gray dust on the by-roads
Is shuffled and blurred
By the dragging feet of beaten men,
And a quiet sound is heard—
A drawing of slow breath, as if
A thousand sleepers stirred.

Rose Macaulay

BOOK SEVEN

354. *The Greater Cats*

The greater cats with golden eyes
Stare out between the bars.
Deserts are there and different skies,
And night with different stars.
They prowl the aromatic hill,
And mate as fiercely as they kill,
And hold the freedom of their will
To roam, to live, to drink their fill;
But this beyond their wit know I:
Man loves a little, and for long shall die.

Their kind across the desert range
Where tulips spring from stones,
Not knowing they will suffer change
Or vultures pick their bones.
Their strength's eternal in their sight,
They rule the terror of the night,
They overtake the deer in flight,
And in their arrogance they smite;
But I am sage, if they are strong:
Man's love is transient, as his death is long.

Yet, oh what powers to deceive!
My wit is turned to faith,
And at this moment I believe
In love, and scout at death.
I came from nowhere, and shall be
Strong, steadfast, swift, eternally:
I am a lion, a stone, a tree,
And as the Polar Star in me
Is fixed my constant heart on thee.
Ah, may I stay for ever blind
With lions, tigers, leopards, and their kind.

V. Sackville-West

THE POET'S PROGRESS

355. *Winter Song*

Many have sung the summer's songs,
Many have sung the corn,
Many have sung white blossom too
That stars the naked thorn—
That stars the black and naked thorn
Against the chalky blue.

But I, crouched up beside the hearth,
Will sing the red and gray;
Red going-down of sun behind
Clubbed woods of winter's day;
Of winter's short and hoddenn day,
That seals the sober hind—

Seals him sagacious through the year,
Since winter comes again,
Since harvest's but another toil,
And sorrow through the grain
Mounts up, through swaths of ripest grain
The sorrow of the soil.

No lightness is there at their heart,
No joy in country folk;
Only a patience slow and grave
Beneath their labour's yoke,—
Beneath the earth's compelling yoke
That only serves its slave.

Since countryman forever holds
The winter's memory,
When he, before the planets' fires
Have faded from the sky,—
From black, resplendent winter sky,—
Must go about his byres;

BOOK SEVEN

And whether to the reaper's whirr
That scythes the falling crops,
He travels round the widening wake
Between the corn and copse,—
The stubble wake 'twixt corn and copse
Where gleaners ply the rake,—

Or whether in his granary left
He pours the winnowed sacks,
Or whether in his yard he routs
The vermin from the stacks,—
The vermin from the staddled stacks
With staves and stones and shouts,—

Still, still through all the molten eves
Whether he reaps or hones,
Or counts the guerdon of his sweat,
Still to his inmost bones,—
His ancient, sage, sardonic bones,—
The winter haunts him yet.

Winter and toil reward him still
While he his course shall go
According to his proven worth,
Until his faith shall know
The ultimate justice, and the slow
Compassion of the earth.

V. Sackville-West

THE POET'S PROGRESS

356. *From a twentieth-century psalter*

Aching with memory, I lie
In the late summer wood.
The guilty stream of history
Pulses in my blood.

Charm he never so wisely now,
The magician of the trees,
The gilder of the autumn bough,
The spider of fantasies,

Cannot by his panic spell
Lure me to forger
The burned house, the poisoned well,
The trap secretly set.

The wood-smeil of September,
Mushroom and berry-tang,
Are what I would remember,
Like songs old England sang.

I should stare up into the green,
Regain a boy's desire
For the unknown, unseen,
The sweet, forbidden fire.

With fruit and lingering flower I'd feed
The ageless, hungry joy,
The all-consuming mental greed
That goads the dreaming boy.

Summer and autumn, every year,
Bring back that youthful flood,
Dark instincts from the past grown dear,
Legends half-understood.

BOOK SEVEN

That was my habit in days of peace
Before the wars began,
The madness of the human race,
The suicide of man.

Not man alone, but the universe
I see from where I lie,
Revolving on this ancient curse,
The death that all must die.

I see the insects at their wars,
I watch the wrestling trees,
The cold collision of the stars,
Night's timeless treacheries.

The wine of all ambitious youth
Is drugged by nature's hand.
To our own past we cry for truth;
None answers that demand.

Some other god than lying Pan
Of cloven thought and hoof,
Remote within the mind of man,
Secure there, and aloof,

Some god, for ever crucified
And risen from the dead,
Is born, like woman, from my side,
Like wisdom, from my head.

His word, my self-engendered mind,
Is whispered where I lie:
The tree-tops tremble in the wind;
The stars kneel in the sky.

Richard Church

THE POET'S PROGRESS

357. *Almswomen*

At Quincey's moat the squandering village ends,
And there in the almshouse dwell the dearest friends
Of all the village, two old dames that cling
As close as any true loves in the spring.
Long, long ago they passed threescore-and-ten,
And in this doll's house lived together then;
All things they have in common, being so poor,
And their one fear, death's shadow at the door.
Each sundown makes them mournful, each sunrise
Brings back the brightness in their failing eyes.

Now happy go the rich fair-weather days
When on the roadside folk stare in amaze
At such a honeycomb of fruit and flowers
As mellows round their threshold; what long hours
They gloat upon their steeping hollyhocks,
Bee's balsams, feathery southernwood, and stocks,
Fiery dragon's-mouths, great mallow leaves
For salves, and lemon-plants in bushy sheaves,
Shagged Esau's hands with five green finger-tips.
Such old sweet names are ever on their lips.
As pleased as little children where these grow
In cobbled pattens and worn gowns they go,
Proud of their wisdom when on gooseberry shoots
They stuck eggshells to fright from coming fruits
The brisk-billed rascals; pausing still to see
Their neighbour owls saunter from tree to tree,
Or in the hushing half-light mouse the lane
Long-winged and lordly.

But when those hours wane
Indoors they ponder, scared by the harsh storm

BOOK SEVEN

Whose pelting saracens on the window swarm,
And listen for the mail to clatter past
And church clock's deep bay withering on the blast;
They feed the fire that flings a freakish light
On pictured kings and queens grotesquely bright,
Platters and pitchers, faded calendars,
And graceful hour-glass trim with lavenders.

Many a time they kiss and cry, and pray
That both be summoned in the self-same day,
And wiseman linnet tinkling in his cage
End too with them the friendship of old age,
And all together leave their treasured room
Some bell-like evening when the may's in bloom.

Edmund Blunden

358. *A time to dance*

For those who had the power
of the forest fires that burn
Leaving their source in ashes
to flush the sky with fire:
Those whom a famous urn
could not contain, whose passion
Brimmed over the deep grave
and dazzled epitaphs:
For all that have won us wings
to clear the tops of grief,
My friend who within me laughs
bids you dance and sing.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Some set out to explore
earth's limit, and little they recked if
Never their feet came near it
outgrowing the need for glory:
Some aimed at a small objective
but the fierce updraught of their spirit
Forced them to the stars.
Are honoured in public who built
The dam that tamed a river;
or holding a salient for hours
Against odds, cut off and killed,
are remembered by one survivor.

All these. But most for those
whom accident made great,—
As a radiant chance encounter
of cloud and sunlight grows
Immortal on the heart;
whose gift was the sudden bounty
Of a passing moment; enriches
the fulfilled eye for ever.
Their spirits float serene
above time's roughest reaches,
But their seed is in us, and over
our lives they are evergreen.

C. Day Lewis

BOOK SEVEN

359. *Tempt me no more*

Tempt me no more; for I
Have known the lightning's hour,
The poet's inward pride,
The certainty of power.

Bayonets are closing round.
I shrink; yet I must wring
A living from despair
And out of steel a song.

Though song, though breath be short,
I'll share not the disgrace
Of those that ran away
Or never left the base.

Comrades, my tongue can speak
No comfortable words,
Calls to a forlorn hope,
Gives work and not rewards.

Oh keep the sickle sharp
And follow still the plough;
Others may reap, though some
See not the winter through.

Father, who endest all,
Pity our broken sleep;
For we lie down with tears
And waken but to weep.

And if our blood alone
Will melt this iron earth,
Take it. It is well spent
Easing a saviour's birth.

C. Day Lewis

THE POET'S PROGRESS

360. *Look, stranger*

Look, stranger, at this island now
The leaping light for your delight discovers;
Stand stable here
And silent be,
That through the channels of the ear
May wander like a river
The swaying sound of the sea.

Here at the small field's ending pause
Where the chalk wall falls to the foam, and its tall
 ledges
Oppose the pluck
And knock of the tide,
And the shingle scrambles after the suck-
ing surf, and the gull lodges
A moment on its sheer side.

Far off like floating seeds the ships
Diverge on urgent voluntary errands;
And the full view
Indeed may enter
And move in memory as now these clouds do,
That pass the harbour mirror
And all the summer through the water saunter.

W. H. Auden

BOOK SEVEN

361. *Fish in the unruffled lakes*

Fish in the unruffled lakes
The swarming colours wear,
Swans in the winter air
A white perfection have,
And the great lion walks
Through his innocent grove;
Lion, fish, and swan
Act, and are gone
Upon Time's toppling wave.

We till shadowed days are done,
We must weep and sing
Duty's conscious wrong,
The Devil in the clock,
The Goodness carefully worn
For atonement or for luck;
We must lose our loves,
On each beast and bird that moves
Turn an envious look.

Sighs for folly said and done
Twist our narrow days;
But I must bless, I must praise
That you, my swan, who have
All gifts that to the swan
Impulsive nature gave,
The majesty and pride,
Last night should add
Your voluntary love.

W. H. Auden

THE POET'S PROGRESS

362. *Morning Sun*

Shuttles of trains going north, going south, drawing
 threads of blue,
The shining of the lines of trains like swords,
Thousands of posters asserting the monopoly of the
 good, the beautiful, the true,
Crowds of people all in the vocative, you and you,
The haze of the morning shot with words.

Yellow sun comes white off the wet streets but bright
Chromium yellows in the gay sun's light,
Filletted sun streaks the purple mist,
Everything is kissed and reticulated with sun
Scooped-up and cupped in the open fronts of shops
And bouncing in the traffic which never stops.

And the street fountain blown across the square
Rainbow-trellises the air and sunlight blazons
The red butcher's and scrolls of fish on marble slabs,
Whistled bars of music crossing silver sprays,
And horns of cars, touché, touché, rapiers' retort, a
 moving cage,
A turning page of shine and sound, the day's maze.

But when the sun goes out, the streets go cold, the
 hanging meat
And tiers of fish are colourless and merely dead,
And the hoots of cars neurotically repeat and the tiptoed
 feet
Of women hurry and falter whose faces are dead;
And I see in the air but not belonging there
The blown gray powder of the fountain gray as the ash
That forming on a cigarette covers the red.

Louis Macneice

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AND
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BOOK V

The selections in this book cover the first three decades of the nineteenth century which witnessed the flowering of the Romantic movement in English poetry. This literary revolution was but a cultural manifestation of the revolutionary fervour that swept over Europe at the end of the eighteenth century and culminated in the French Revolution. The Romantic movement was heralded by the publication of the "Lyrical Ballads", a joint production of Wordsworth and Coleridge in 1798. The poets sought to widen the boundaries of poetry by including new subject matter, simplifying the style and experimenting with new poetic forms. The two main characteristics of the new poetry were love of nature and love of the past. Wordsworth gave prime importance to nature in his poems, while Coleridge contributed the magic and beauty of the remote past. Scott with his mediaeval Scottish metrical romances illustrates this phase of the movement. Byron brought the exotic and colourful atmosphere of the east into his stories in verse. The intense subjectivity which is a pre-occupation of the romantic poets reached its extreme limits in Byron and Shelley. Spontaneity and variety were the keynotes of this poetry. Many new forms were introduced. The heroic couplet lost its predominance. The conventional restrictions, stereotyped epithets and monotonous imagery of the preceding age gave place to natural freedom, vigorous and individual style and vivid picturesque images. But one besetting weakness of the romantic poets was a lack of sense of form and proportion.

William Wordsworth, 1770-1850

William Wordsworth, a major poet in English literature, is noted for his contribution to the Romantic movement. Inspired mainly by nature he wrote in a style often simple but on occasions rising to heights of grandeur approached only by Shakespeare. He collaborated with his friend, Coleridge, in the publication of the "Lyrical Ballads" in 1798. Though he started as an ardent admirer of the French Revolution his political fervour cooled down later and he turned to nature for peace and consolation. He produced his best work between the years 1792 and 1812. His aim was to widen the boundaries of poetry to include the commonest scenes and incidents in nature and human life. The selections from his works in this volume illustrate his unique gifts as a poet.

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POEM 160. I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

Written at Grasmere in 1804. Wordsworth believed in the interaction of nature with human emotions. He also held that poetry should spring from emotion recollected in tranquillity. He was probably moved to write this poem by a scene recorded by his sister, Dorothy Wordsworth, in her journal under the date April 15, 1802—"When we were in the woods . . . we saw a good number of daffodils close to the water-side . . . we saw a long belt of them along the shore. I never saw daffodils so beautiful; some rested their heads on the stones, the rest tossed and reeled and danced and seemed as if they verily danced with the wind; they looked so gay and glancing".

Jocund, joyful.

POEM 161. TO THE CUCKOO

Visionary hours, memories.

Faery, magical.

POEM 162. THE SOLITARY REAPER

This is one of a group entitled "Memorials of a tour in Scotland."

Sickle, a small scythe, a curved reaping-knife.

Old, unhappy, far-off things, a famous passage that first struck the keynote of romanticism.

POEM 163. MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD

The child is, etc., the lines have become proverbial.

POEM 164. LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

A sincere idealization and glorification of nature as a living presence, offering companionship, consolation, and peace.

Sate, sat.

POEM 165. SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

A beautiful and moving tribute to the poet's wife.

Sweet records, promises as sweet, reflecting the past and signifying the future

POEM 166. YARROW UNVISITED

Yarrow, a river immortalized in Scottish legend and song and associated with tragic events. One legend told of a handsome youth drowned accidentally in Yarrow. Another version narrated his murder by a jealous rival. In 1803 Wordsworth and

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his wife visited the valley of the Tweed. Yarrow was only a short distance from there. But they decided not to visit it then!

Winsome, charming.

Marrow, a Scottish word meaning companion. Here it denotes the poet's wife.

Couch, lie.

Braes, slopes. **Frae**, from. Both Scotch words.

Gala and Teviot are both tributaries of the Tweed.

Lintwhite, the song-bird linnet.

Thorough, through.

Holms, level, fertile land on a river bank.

Strath, valley.

Beeves, oxen

kine, cows.

POEM 167. YARROW VISITED

Famous flower, refers to a local legend of a murdered youth.

Water-wraith, an apparition supposed to be seen by a person just before his death.

POEM 168. ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

This is one of the most superb odes in the language. The irregular structure and movement are influenced by the emotional changes in the content. The fusion between form and content, except for a slight defect in stanzas 7 and 8, is perfect. Some critics find fault with the universalizing of an individual experience. But to an Indian mind the thought is familiar and peculiarly appealing. The glorious transfiguration of the world into a visionary region of splendour in one's childhood and the succeeding disillusionment in old age are common experiences. The attribution of this to a transition from a divine pre-natal existence is only a poetic faith. The germs of this philosophical idea are found in Plato's "Dialogues". The value of the poem rests on its imaginative transmutation of natural scenes and experiences into something abidingly beautiful and investing them with spiritual significance. In the concluding lines the poet offers a consolation for what has been lost by stressing what remains.

Stanzas 1 & 2. The poet laments the passing away of the divine glory which had invested the earth in his childhood.

Stanza 3. The whole of nature rejoices; but the poet's heart is heavy with sorrow. He gives expression to his grief through this song and is fortified again.

Tabor, a small drum.

Grief, at some splendour that has vanished from the world.

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Timely utterance, writing of this poem.

Cataracts, echoing water-falls abounding in the Lake country.

The season wrong, the poet is attuned with nature in its rejoicing.

Fields of sleep, fields still calm and peaceful in the morning.

Heart of May, joy associated with spring.

Stanza 4. The poet feels at one with nature in this universal rejoicing. But the objects of nature have lost their pristine glory. He wonders where that dream-like splendour has vanished.

Coronal, a wreath worn on the head.

Culling, gathering.

Pansy, also called heartsease, the flower of thought.

Visionary gleam, splendour of childhood days.

Stanza 5. The subject of this stanza is the divine origin of the soul. In childhood the soul retains memories of the splendour of its original habitation. But worldly contact and experiences cloud the vision in later years and create disillusionment.

Our birth is but a sleep, the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul.

Prison house, a Platonic idea, slightly modified; according to Plato the child is born in the prison of sensory experience which he can escape only by the study of philosophy.

In his joy, according to the poet we see more deeply into the life of things during moments of intense pleasure.

Nature's priest, worshipper of nature.

East, visionary splendour.

Stanza 6. Earth tries to compensate man for what he has lost.

Stanza 7. The poet summarizes the various stages of development, experiences, and activities from childhood to old age.

Fretted, impatient.

Humorous, used in the Elizabethan or Jonsonian sense.

Stanza 8. The poet believes that the child alone has sufficient penetration and insight to apprehend the spiritual significance of the universe.

Eye among the blind. The child has power of vision to see into the secrets of nature denied to adults.

Stanza 9. The thought of that vanished glory influences human character and conduct.

Obstinate questionings, etc. : Sudden doubts about the forms and substantiality of the outer world. At such moments of doubt the material world falls away from us and we seem to be groping in dark, shadowy, unknown regions. In this connection the poet has written, "I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in my own immaterial nature. In later periods of life I have . . . rejoiced

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over the remembrances. To that dreamlike vividness and splendour which invests objects of sight in childhood everyone ... could bear testimony". The universe seems to lose its material shape and is transfigured into an ideal vision. Only then we see into the secrets of nature. Such mystical insight, according to the poet, is the sole sustaining force and inspiration in later life.

Master light, influencing and controlling our actions.

Stanza 10. The poet seeks consolation in the things that remain and reconciles himself to those that have vanished. There is a sudden emotional change in this stanza reflected in the quicker movement.

Primal sympathy, etc., the abiding values of the human spirit—sympathy, the chastening and purifying influence of sorrow, dauntless faith, and the philosophic mind.

Stanza 11. The poet once again stresses his love of nature and its consolatory influence.

Forbode, fear.

Fret, more agitatedly.

Palms, prizes.

Blows, blooms.

POEM 169. NUNS FRET NOT AT THEIR CONVENT'S NARROW ROOM

This and the succeeding poem show how felicitously Wordsworth could handle the Italian form of the sonnet. They illustrate the excellence and limitations of this literary medium. Note the occurrence of three rhymes in the Octave of 170.

Wheel, spinning wheel.

Furness, a hilly district in Lancashire.

POEM 170. SCORN NOT THE SONNET

Shakespeare : 1564-1616 Some critics consider that even if Shakespeare had not written any dramas he would have ranked high as a poet on the strength of his sonnet-sequence which is of profound autobiographical significance though the key to many of the allusions therein has been lost.

Petrarch, Italian poet of the 14th century who wrote a series of sonnets to a lady called Laura. He invented the Italian form of the sonnet, which is sometimes called after him.

Tasso, a 16th century Italian poet who wrote the epic "Jerusalem delivered".

Camoens, a Portuguese poet of the 16th century, author of the epic "Lusiad".

Dante (1265-1321), the greatest Italian poet, who wrote the "Divine Comedy".

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Spenser, a 16th century English poet, author of the "Faerie Queene".

When a damp fell round the path, when Milton lost his sight.

Milton, his sonnets are deservedly famous for their elevated thought and compressed diction.

POEM 172. THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

At all hours, throughout the night.

Proteus, a sea-god who guarded Poseidon's flock of seals. He could take many forms—hence the adjective "Protean".

Triton, another sea-god with the tail of a fish who carried a conch or horn-shaped shell.

POEM 173. MILTON, THOU SHOULDST BE LIVING AT THIS HOUR

This and the five succeeding sonnets based on political themes were composed between 1802 and 1807 and published in a group entitled "Poems dedicated to National Independence and Liberty".

Altar, sword and pen: The clergy, the army and the scholars.

Fireside, home-life.

POEM 176. THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND

Tyrant, Napoleon who suppressed Switzerland and reconstituted it into the Helvetic Republic.

POEM 177. NOVEMBER, 1806

Mighty empire, that of Prussia in the battle of Jena, October 14, 1806, by Napoleon.

POEM 178. ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENE- TIAN REPUBLIC

The Venetian Republic was dissolved by the Treaty of Campo Formio in 1797.

POEM 179. INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL

This was written in 1821 and published next year in a group called "Ecclesiastical sonnets" tracing the evolution of English religious institutions.

The royal saint, the pious King Henry VI, the founder of the Chapel.

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Sir Walter Scott, 1772-1832

Sir Walter Scott, attained greater fame as a novelist than as a poet. But his literary career began with narrative poems dealing with Scottish history and legends. His gifts for story-telling and characterisation and his facility in handling rapid metres are well illustrated in his "Lay of the Last Minstrel", "Marmion", "Rokeby" and other poems which are interspersed with several ballads.

POEM 180. SONG

Rue, aromatic, evergreen, medicinal plant.

doublet, a word now obsolete; a doublet was a close-fitting body garment for men.

trou, believe.

fain, joyfully.

POEM 181. O BRIGNALL BANKS

Brignall, in Yorkshire.

Wend, go.

Read, solve.

Palfrey, horse.

Winds, sounds.

Musketo, a short musket.

Dragoon, a cavalry soldier.

Lists the tuck of drum, hears the beating of the drums.

Mickle, much.

Fiend whose lantern lights the mead, The Will-O'-The Wisp.

Mead, meadow.

POEM 182. JOCK OF HAZELDEAN

Sall, **loot**, etc., are Lowland Scots' dialect words.

Sall, shall.

Loot, let.

Ha', hall.

Fa', fall.

Kirk, church.

Baith, both.

Awa', away.

POEM 184. CORONACH

Coronach, a wild lament or dirge of the Scottish highlanders.

Flushing, bloom.

Correi, hollow side of a hill.

Sage counsel in cumber, wise adviser in times of trouble.

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POEM 185. LOCHINVAR

Brake, literally bracken : the line means that he broke through all hindrances.

Dastard, coward.

Tread we a measure, let us dance.

Galliard, dance.

'Twere, it would have been.

Charger, horse.

Croupe, hind quarters of the horse.

Scaur, rocky mountainside.

POEM 186. HAROLD'S SONG

Ravensheuch is on the north side of the estuary of the river Forth. Roslin is a town on the south side of the river. Roslin Chapel is the burial place of the St. Clair family.

Firth, inlet of the sea.

Inch, island.

Sea-mews, seagulls.

Water-sprite, water spirit.

Swathed, wrapped.

The ring they ride, a sport involving skill in horsemanship, generally described as tilting at the ring.

POEM 187. BREATHES THERE A MAN WITH SOUL SO DEAD

Caledonia, Scotland.

POEM 188. THE BONNETS OF BONNY DUNDEE

In 1688 James II was deposed and William of Orange became King of England, Scotland and Ireland. John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, opposed the convention in Edinburgh that had agreed to accept William. He rode out of the city, surrounded the Highlanders and fought a battle at Killiecrankie, which he won ; but was killed in the moment of victory.

Gang, go.

West Port, one of the gates of Edinburgh.

Provost, mayor.

Douce, cautions.

Gude, good.

Deil, devil.

Bends, windings.

Bow, a street in Edinburgh.

Ilk, each.

Carline, old woman.

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Pow, head.
Flyting, scolding.
Couthie, knowing.
Slee, sly.
Whigs, supporters of King William.
The west, of Scotland, where the Whigs were most numerous.
Set tryst, gathered.
Cowls, rascals.
Spits, sharp-pointed metal rods.
Long-hafted gullies, long-handled knives.
Close-heads, entrances to narrow passages.
Causeway, a road.
Gordon, the duke of Gordon.
Mons Meg, a huge ancient cannon on the terrace of Edinburgh castle.
Duniewassals, highland soldiers.
Target, shield.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1772-1834

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was a moving force in the romantic revival. Exploring the remote and the foreign, he contributed the magic and the supernatural to counterbalance Wordsworth's naturalism in the movement.

POEM 189. KUBLA KHAN

The poet had been reading a work called "Purchas's Pilgrimage" and been impressed by a wonderful description of a palace built by the King Kubla Khan. As a result of that impression the whole poem is supposed to have emerged into his sub-conscious mind during a dream. When he awoke the vision and the verse description were so vivid in his mind that he immediately recorded the words. But in the course of his writing he was interrupted by a call and when he returned he found to his dismay that he could not remember any more. Hence the fragmentary nature of the poem.

Kubla Khan (1216-1294): The founder of the Mongol dynasty who conquered and unified the whole of China. The splendour of his palaces and the magnificence of his court life have been recorded by the traveller, Marco Polo.

Sinuuous, winding.

Demon-lover, a mediaeval belief quite a favourite with the poet.

Dulcimer, a stringed musical instrument.

Abora, a mountain in Abyssinia.

Circle, magic circle which cannot be crossed.

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POEM 190. "THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER"

This is the poet's best work. The present version is a revised one with the marginal notes added and a few passages re-written and improved. In its masterly handling of the ballad metre, use of archaic language, and creation of a supernatural atmosphere evoking horror and suspense the poem is a literary tour-de-force.

PART I

Loon, idiot.

Eftsoons, immediately.

Below the Kirk, etc. The order in which the objects would disappear when the ship left the harbour.

Till over the mast, the ship crossed the Equator.

Bassoon, a musical wind instrument.

Southward, the storm drives the ship to the South Pole.

Clifts, perhaps a combination of cliffs and clefts.

Swound, swoon.

Albatross, a large sea-bird inhabiting the Polar regions.

Vespers, evenings.

PART II

The sun now rose, etc. The southern wind is driving the ship northward; hence this change.

Uprist, rose up.

Right up above the mast, the ship has reached the equator again.

Death-fires, variously interpreted, perhaps refers to the phosphorescent lights glowing over the surface of the sea.

The Albatross . . . was hung, a physical impossibility as the bird was very large.

PART III

Tacked, moved in a zig-zag course.

Work us weal, help us.

Gossamere, spiders' webs floating in the air.

At one stride, etc., describes the sudden leap of darkness in equatorial regions.

Clomb, climbed.

Nether, lower.

PART IV

The concluding stanzas in this part indicate the awakening of the love of nature and of all living things in the mariner's heart. This is the turning point of the poem. Contrast this attitude with that in stanza 10 in Part II. He could not pray earlier but now prayer spontaneously wells up in his heart.

Hoary flakes, the water fell off the backs of the snakes in white sparks.

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PART V

Moved onward, the spirit of the South Pole in obedience to the angelic troop is moving the ship Northward from below.

Ellish, magical, unnatural.

Silly, useless, empty.

Sere, dry.

Sheen, shining.

Corses, bodies.

Charnel-dungeon, burial vault.

PART VI

The light house top, note the reverse order of the appearance of the objects to the returning ship.

Harbour-bar, limit of the harbour.

PART VII

Trow, vow.

Warped, twisted.

Tod, bush.

Shrive me, hear my confession.

The last four stanzas form a fitting conclusion to the poem. Though direct moral teaching does not always produce a happy effect in poetry, here the ideas cohere with the atmosphere and are entirely in keeping with the character of the speaker.

Robert Southey, 1774-1843

Friend and brother-in-law of Coleridge, Southey wrote an enormous number of poems set in eastern countries and dealing with oriental themes. He was appointed Poet-Laureate in 1813. Now he is chiefly remembered for his prose-writings and shorter poems.

Walter Savage Landor, 1775-1864

More famous for his prose works like the "Imaginary Conversations". Landor wrote a few long poems which are now deservedly forgotten. But his shorter poems are marvels of chiselled perfection with disciplined emotion, a fine sense of form and condensed style quite characteristic of the classical literature which was the source of inspiration for his best work.

The two poems included here are reminiscent of the master-pieces in the classical anthology.

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POEM 193. PAST RUINED ILION HELEN LIVES

Ilion, the Greek name for Troy.

Helen, the beautiful wife of the Greek prince Menelaus. Her abduction by the Trojan prince Paris caused the most famous war in ancient times.

Alcestis, wife of King Admetus brought back from the world of death by Hercules.

Thomas Campbell, 1777-1844

Thomas Campbell was born and educated in Glasgow. He published his ambitious poem "Pleasures of Hope" at the age of twenty-two.

His shorter poems like "The Mariners of England" have a vigorous directness and captivating rhythm and appeal perennially to the patriotic sentiment of Englishmen.

POEM 194. HOHENLINDEN

Composed in 1800, the poem describes the battle between French and Austrian armies in the forest of Hohenlinden in which the Austrians were routed. The title, meaning "High lime-trees", refers to the village of that name in Saxony.

Linden, a lime-tree forest in Bavaria.

Riven, cloven.

Dun, dull, brown smoke.

Frank and Hun, the French and Hungarians.

Munich, the capital of Bavaria on the banks of the river Iser.

POEM 195. THE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

This poem also was written in 1800 when England was at war with France. In 1798 the French fleet had been defeated by England. Russia had formed a coalition with Sweden and Denmark against England. The poem was written just when England was trying to break up the coalition and hence its tremendous contemporary appeal.

Lauch, inappropriately used for a standard.

Blake (1599-1657), the famous Admiral of the Commonwealth remembered for his defeat of the Dutch in 1653.

Nelson (1758-1805), the hero of the Nile, Copenhagen, and Trafalgar.

POEM 196. MEN OF ENGLAND

Hampden, John Hampden who resisted the illegal levy of ship money by Charles I and later became one of the leaders of the Republicans in the Civil War.

Russell, Lord William Russell, beheaded in 1683 for his connection with the Rye House Plot.

NOTES

Sidney, Algernon Sidney beheaded with Russell for the same reason.

Agincourt, The place where Henry V won a famous victory over the French in 1415.

Thomas Moore, 1779-1852

Born and educated in Ireland, Moore settled in London in 1799 and began his literary career with a translation of Anacreon's poems. His long narrative poem, "Lalla Rookh" set against an oriental background is now very little read. But the "Irish Melodies" published in 1834 proved very popular and demonstrated his lyrical powers.

POEM 197. A CANADIAN BOAT SONG

Utawa's, Ottawa's

POEM 198. THE HARP THAT ONCE THROUGH TARA'S HALLS

Tara, the name of a village in County Meath, Ireland, which served as a Royal residence and had the stone of Destiny on which Irish kings were crowned.

POEM 200. SHE IS FAR FROM THE LAND

The heroine of this lament was Sarah Curran, whose lover, Robert Emmett, led the Irish rebellion of 1803. The rebellion failed and Emmett was executed. After his death Sarah Curran emigrated to the United States.

POEM 201. A WET SHEET AND A FLOWING SEA

Sheet, a sail-rope.

A wind that follows, a favourable wind.

Lee, the side of the ship sheltered from the wind.

Horned, like a crescent.

Ebenezer Elliot, 1781-1849

Ebenezer Elliot, known to history as "the Corn-Law Rhymer," was from his early days a virulent partisan of workers and peasants.

POEM 202. BATTLE SONG

Attila, a king of the Huns of the 5th century A.D. who earned the title "The Scourge of God" for his devastation of Europe.
Scythian, Russian.

George Gordon, Noel, Lord Byron, 1788-1824

George Gordon, Noel, Lord Byron, sprang into meteoric prominence by his "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage", the result of his extended travels on the Continent after he had been hounded out of England by a conservative society for his moral

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lapses. His oriental romances, colourful and exotic, completely ousted Scott from the poetic field. Byron's contemporary fame at home and abroad was never equalled by that of any other English writer. Facile and fluent in his versification he captivated his readers by his unfamiliar descriptions and autobiographical characterisation. Of all the romantic poets Byron alone had the saving grace of humour. His powers of irony and biting satire are evidenced by his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" and "Don Juan". He expiated a life of extreme unconventionality by a glorious gesture to regain the liberty of Greece.

POEM 203. THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

The destruction of the army of Sennacherib, King of Assyria, is recounted in 2 *Kings*, xix. 35, 36. "And it came to pass that night, that the Angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred four-score and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib, King of Assyria, departed and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh."

Cohorts, army divisions.

Ashur, Assyria.

Baal, the Sun-God of Assyria.

Gentiles, the Heathen races.

POEM 204. SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

Mellowed, softened.

Gaudy, garish.

Raven, black.

Eloquent, proclaiming loudly innocence, virtue, peace and

POEM 205. THE ISLES OF GREECE

At the time when this poem was written Greece had been subject to Turkey for several centuries. When the Greeks rebelled Byron hastened to help them, and died in Greece. This poem calls on them to rise against their oppressors.

Sappho, Famous Greek poetess of the 6th century B.C. only fragments of whose works have survived.

Delos, an island in the Aegean Sea, the birth place of Apollo, the God of Light, Music, and the Arts.

Scian and Teian, Heroic and Love poetry.

Islands of the Blest, the Happy Isles or Elysium, the abode of heroes after death.

Marathon, where the famous battle between the Greeks and the Persian invaders was fought in 490 B.C.

A King, Xerxes, King of the Persians who invaded Greece in 480 B.C.

NOTES

Salamis, where the Greeks won a naval victory, completely destroying the Persian fleet.

Thermopylae, a pass between the mountains and the sea, where a small Greek army, among whom were three hundred Spartans under their king Leonidas, defied the enormous Persian host. Though thousands of the Persians were slain all the three hundred perished in the battle.

Samian, of Samos, an island in the Aegean Sea.

Bacchanal, a worshipper of Bacchus, the God of Wine.

Pyrrhic Phalanx, Greek Military formation with close ranks and files.

Cadmus, a legendary hero who introduced the alphabet into Greece from Phoenicia or Egypt.

Anacreon, a Greek lyric poet of the 6th century B.C.

Polycrates, benevolent tyrant of Samos, 6th century B.C.

Tyrant of the Chersonese, Miltiades, coloniser and ruler of the Chersonese, 6th century B.C.

Chersonese, the ancient name of the peninsula of Gallipoli.

Suli and Parga, places in western Greece.

Doric, Spartan.

Heracleidan, descending from Heracles or Hercules, the Greek hero.

Latin, here means French.

Sunium, the ancient name of a cape south of Athens.

POEM 206. LINES FROM "THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS"

Abydos, an ancient town in Asia Minor.

Zephyr, the Greek name for the West wind.

Gul, the Turkish name of the rose.

Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1792-1822

Percy Bysshe Shelley, the greatest lyric poet of England, came of a family of landed gentry and was educated at Oxford. The "Skylark", "The Cloud" and other poems of his are exquisite masterpieces. His elegy "Adonais" on the death of his friend, Keats, is a major work of supreme beauty and excellence. In sheer spontaneity and inevitable naturalness of song Shelley stands alone and unapproachable.

POEM 208. CHORUS IN "HELLAS"

A chorus from the classical lyrical drama "Hellas" prophesying the resurrection of Greece's vanished glory.

Hellas, the classical name for Greece.

Peneus, a river of Pontus falling into the Euxine.

Tempe, a valley in Thessaly.

Cyclads, a circular group of islands in the Aegean sea.

NOTES

Argo, the ship of the heroes who sailed in quest of the Golden Fleece under Jason.

Orpheus, a famous legendary Greek musician who could charm trees and stones by his music.

Ulysses, Calypso, Ulysses was the famous King of Ithaca noted for his wisdom. During his return from Troy he stayed for a time with the nymph Calypso on whose island he had been shipwrecked. He refused her offer of immortality and continued his homeward voyage.

Laian, referring to Laius, King of Thebes, slain by his son Oedipus.

Sphinx, a mythical monster with the body of a winged lion and the head of a woman who propounded riddles to the Thebans and slew all who did not solve them. Oedipus ultimately solved the riddles and the Sphinx killed herself.

Saturn, a Roman God identified with the Greek deity Cronos.

POEM 209. TO NIGHT

Star-inwrought, the sky is metaphorically imagined as a dark mantle inset with starry gems.

Opiate, inducing sleep.

POEM 211. THE CLOUD

The poem is a delicately beautiful interpretation of scientific facts.

My pilot, Shelley was a natural myth-maker.

Sphere-fire, the sun.

Cenotaph, the unclouded, blue sky is like a memorial monument to the vanished cloud; the word means an empty tomb.

POEM 212. ARETHUSA

This is another example of Shelley's nature myth.

Arethusa and Alpheus, rivers in South-western Greece.

Acroceraunian, meaning "with thunder-smitten summit" term applied to certain mountains in Greece.

Erymanthus, another mountain in Greece.

Dorian deep, the sea between southern Greece and Sicily.

Asphodel, Lily-like flower.

Enna, in Sicily.

Ortygian, referring to Delos in Greece.

POEM 213. TO A SKYLARK

The poem is noted for its cascade of images and the expression of rapturous passion.

Spirit, Shelley throughout stresses the ethereal nature of the lark without body or habitation.

NOTES

- Unpremeditated**, spontaneous.
Unbodied joy, disembodied spirit of happiness.
Even, poetical form of evening
Silver sphere, the star referred to in stanza 4.
In the light of thought, the intense brilliance of thought prevents identification of the poet's personality.
Aerial, perhaps "pervading the air".
Heavy-winged thieves, slow winds heavy with stolen perfume.
Vernal showers, spring rain.
Chorus hymeneal, marriage song; from "Hymen" Greek God of marriage.
Measure, song.

POEM 214. ODE TO THE WEST WIND

Acclaimed as the greatest poem that Shelley ever wrote for its clear-cut brilliance of imagery and elemental rapidity of movement, this ode illustrates once more the myth-making quality of Shelley. It consists of five sonnets.

Ghosts, the imagination of the poet pictures the dead leaves in autumn scattered by the West wind as ghosts fleeing before an exorcising magician.

Hectic, feverish.

Destroyer and preserver, the wind scatters and destroys the leaves but preserves the seeds.

Angels, messengers.

Maenad, female worshipper of Dionysus or Bacchus subject to maniacal frenzy.

Baiae, on the Campanian Coast to the West of the Bay of Naples.

Pumice Isle, formed by lava deposits from the Volcano Vesuvius. Baiae was destroyed by a volcanic eruption.

Oozy, wet.

Quicken, give life to.

The identification of the poet with the subject in the concluding stanza is a characteristic of Shelley who projects his personality into the theme.

POEM 215. ADONAIIS

A magnificent example of the pastoral elegy in English, this poem was written by Shelley to commemorate the death of his friend and fellow-poet, Keats, in 1821. Shelley erroneously believed along with many others of the time that Keats had died of a broken heart, discouraged by the savage onslaughts of some reviewers who tore his poetry to pieces to make a critic's holiday. Hence the central idea of the poem—a great genius cut off in its

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prime before fulfilling its promise. "Adonais" has an epic sweep and majesty of movement, grandeur of philosophical content and splendour of imagery that make it unique in English literature. For this poem Shelley used the Spenserian stanza of nine lines, rhymed *ababbcbcc*.

Adonais. Probably Shelley wanted to draw a comparison between the young Keats and the youthful god of nature, Adonais, whose death was mourned by Greek women every year in ancient times. Though feminine in form the name recalls the classical background and stresses the premature death of Keats.

Stanza 2. Urania, commonly the Muse of Astronomy, stands here for a spiritualized conception of Aphrodite, the goddess of Love. Urania has also been invoked by Milton as the spirit of celestial song and sister of celestial wisdom.

Stanza 4. *Sire of an immortal strain*: Milton in his last years complained of having been left alone, blind and helpless in an unfriendly world with all his most cherished ideals crashing round him.

Third among the sons of light, after Homer and Virgil or Dante.

Stanza 5. Shelley mentions here three classes of poets who come after the eternal stars like Milton. Some realise the limitations and dangers of their calling and are content with a modest achievement, thereby building up a lasting reputation. Secondly there are the blazing geniuses like Keats, striving incessantly after perfection, who dare to fight against time and circumstance and perish gloriously. Lastly there are poets like Shelley who still follow the thorny path of poetry in search of a noble ideal.

Stanza 7. *High capital, Rome*, the cradle and grave of a mighty civilisation.

Stanza 9. *The quick dreams*, to poet's visions.

Stanza 10. *One, one dream.*

Lost angel of a ruined paradise, the dream has been driven out of the dead poet's heart.

Stanza 11. *Anadem, cornet, tiara.*

Stanza 12. *Clips, embraces, surrounds* The splendour flushes through the pale body of Adonais as a meteor passes through a wreath of moonlit vapour.

Stanza 14. Now come the aspects of nature—Morning, Ocean, Echo repeating the poet's verses, Spring and Albion.

Stanza 16. *Phoebus and Hyacinth.* Hyacinthus was a handsome youth beloved of the Sun-god, Phoebus. He was accidentally killed by a discus thrown by the god and was changed into a flower of the same name.

Narcissus, another handsome youth in classical legend who fell in love with his own reflection and pined to death. He was also changed into a flower of that name

NOTES

Both, here refers to the flowers, not persons.

Stanza 17. **Lorn nightingale**, the subject of a superbode by Keats.

Albion, England, so called on account of her white cliffs.

Cain, son of Adam, murdered his brother Abel.

Here it stands for the reviewer whose violent attack, according to Shelley, caused the death of Keats.

Stanzas 19 & 20. The poet contrasts the eternal cycle of decay and birth in nature by which the earth renews her youth perpetually with the extinction of the great poetic mind.

That alone which knows. The human mind, also called the "Intense atom".

Stanza 23. Urania, bidden by Misery, Echoes and Dreams comes to the place where Adonais lies dead.

Stanza 24. Wherever drops of blood were shed from Urania's feet pierced by thorns, flowers sprang up.

Stanza 26. Chained to time. Shelley conceives of true immortality as complete absorption in the spirit of nature after death. Urania for all her divinity has separate, individual existence and hence cannot transcend the limitations of time and space.

Stanza 27. Keats dared the hostility of the critical world, completely unprotected and unarmed, with his poetic powers not even fully developed.

Crescent, growing.

Stanza 28. Shelley lashes out at the critics, the literary parasites, the vultures that feed on dead reputations.

The Pythian, Apollo who killed the python—here refers to Lord Byron who in his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" castigated the Scottish reviewers who had dared to attack him.

Stanza 30. Introduces the human mourners.

The pilgrim of eternity, Byron, perhaps referring to his "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage",

Ierne, Ireland sent her lyrist Moore.

Stanza 31. A wonderful self-portrait, pathetic in its unassuming simplicity and sincerity.

Actaeon-like, Actaeon, the classical hunter, saw the goddess Diana bathing and hence was changed by her into a stag. He was torn to pieces by his own hounds. Shelley tried to lay bare the mysteries of nature and was punished for the attempt.

Stanza 34. Cain's or Christ's, Shelley aroused diametrically opposite reactions among his contemporaries. A smug, self-complacent section of the English people hated him as an atheist and destroyer of the moral fabric of society, while some progressively-minded elements hailed him as a revolutionary, a lover of liberty, a self-sacrificing and self-dedicated hero.

Stanza 35. Describes Leigh Hunt, a faithful friend of Keats.

Stanza 37. Again Shelley castigates the critics.

NOTES

Stanza 38. The turning point of the poem. The poet reconciles himself to the death of his hero by the thought that the latter had attained immortality. The idea is Platonic in origin ; the immortal soul merges with the Infinite after death.

Stanza 42. The dead Keats has been absorbed into nature.

Stanza 44. Great poets never die. Whenever their thoughts inspire other young men they live again.

Stanza 45. Keats has become one of the inheritors of unfulfilled renown.

Chatterton (1752-1770). Wordsworth's "marvellous boy, the sleepless soul that perished in his pride," author of the forged Rowley Poems, a perverted genius who wanted to become famous quickly and died of a broken heart when his hoax was discovered.

Sidney, Sir Philip : (1554-1586). Author of the "Arcadia", "Astrophel and Stella", etc., the mirror and pattern of his times, and the symbol of chivalry—another glorious life cut off in its prime.

Lucan (39-65 A.D.), a Roman poet who earned the jealousy and enmity of Nero and had to commit suicide.

Stanza 50. Pyramid, a monument standing near the grave of Keats, commemorating a Roman.

Stanza 52, a justly famous passage.

The one, eternity ; The many, individual lives. Life with its multitudinous attractions clouds our correct apprehension and understanding of eternity.

Stanza 54. A prophetic passage. The poet, carried away by his own bardic fervour, launches himself once more on a flight of song, soaring into the empyrean of imagination from which he never returns. Like a fledgling the poet has been indulging in trial flights so far, reaching unto ethereal heights and descending to mundane themes alternately. Starting from the heavenly Urania he comes down to the place of death of Keats in Rome, goes up once more to incarnate Keats' poetic aspirations and ideals, and touches earth again to invoke Morning, the Spring and the echoes ; once again he soars up to Urania, swoops down upon the wolfish critics and describes the human mourners, goes up to record the absorption of Keats into nature and his transfiguration as a star among stars, climbs down for a moment to take breath and finally sweeps back into imaginative space—a fitting conclusion to a great and solemn requiem.

POEM 216. OZYMANDIAS

Ozymandias, a hellenised form of the name of an Egyptian King.

Mocked, imitated, perhaps with ironic intent.

The hand (of the sculptor) that reproduced the King's frown and sneers, and the *heart* (of the king) that produced them, are

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both the objects of the verb "survive". The sculptor and his subject have perished, the ruins alone remain.

John Keats, 1795-1821

John Keats was born of humble parents and first intended to study medicine, but a casual contact with the works of Spenser and Homer awakened his poetic genius and after settling down in London he started to write poetry. His early works were subjected to the savage attacks of "Blackwood's Magazine". His subsequent illness was erroneously attributed to this. In 1820 he left on a foreign tour. His health grew worse and he died in Rome in 1821. It is only a half-truth to say with Shelley that he is an inheritor of unfulfilled poetic renown. Within a short span of life he managed to cram an impressive literary output of surprising maturity. His aim was to load every rift with ore and his poetic style bears evidence to his careful choice of epithets, picturesque imagery, and masterly handling of sound effects. He has the power to evoke and make credible a remote and exotic atmosphere. He wrote some of the best odes in English. His narrative poems "Isabella" and the "Eve of St. Agnes" are masterpieces of their kind. He furnishes the singular example of a poet who refused to concern himself with contemporary political upheavals and sought refuge in the evocation and contemplation of beauty.

POEM 217. ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

A perfectly constructed ode in which the music of the style and the vividness of the beautiful description produce a satisfying impression.

Sylvan historian, recorder of forest scenes.

Legend, probably inscription.

Tempe, a valley in Thessaly.

Arcady, is a Province of Greece.

Timbrels, small drums.

Heard melodies, etc., songs unheard excite our imagination and stimulate never-ending curiosity.

Fair youth, etc., though the figures do not have dynamic growth and movement they have the compensation of permanence. Mortal lovers perish; trees decay and fall, but some unknown artist has caught that vital, fleeting glimpse of young men pursuing beautiful maidens, musicians playing upon the pipe and trees flowering in spring and perpetuated it on the urn; the figures in the picture will not be dimmed by time.

High-sorrowful, full of sorrow. The poet contrasts the transience of human life and the enduring nature of art. The rarefied feeling expressed through art is the sublimated force of human passion which by its very nature is satiating and painful.

NOTES

Silken, shining and smooth.

Attitude, perfection of form.

Brede, the older form of "braid".

Cold pastoral, depicting forest life on marble.

The last two lines of the concluding stanza are the message of the urn to troubled and restless humanity. Though we cannot identify the thought with the poet's own philosophy of life, still the identification of the world of art and that of moral values and the view that the human personality in its striving towards perfection sometimes expresses itself through the aesthetic medium and sometimes in terms of ethical verities, are quite characteristic of Keats.

POEM 218. ODE TO AUTUMN

This is a very picturesque ode. It unfolds a series of vivid, clear-cut, and striking images. Autumn in England is the season of fruition and decay; it heralds the advent of winter and the disappearance of greenness from the earth. Note the personification of autumn in the second stanza.

Plump, to make plump.

Winnowing, separating chaff from the grain.

Drowsed, made sleepy.

Fume, soporific smell.

Swath, growing grass or corn ready for mowing or reaping.

Bloom, bathe in red glow.

Sallows, willows.

Bourn, limit or boundary.

Croft, enclosed land near a residence.

POEM 219. ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

Hemlock, here the juice of a poisonous plant.

Lethe, the river of oblivion in the Infernal regions mentioned in classical mythology; human souls had to cross it before birth and after death.

Dryad, nymph of the trees and forests.

Flora, Roman Goddess of Flowers.

Provencal, belonging to the South of France.

Hippocrene, the fountain of the muses that sprang from Mount Helicon from the striking of the hoof of Pegasus, the winged horse. Keats would make it that the spring ran wine.

Winking, twinkling.

Spectre-like, thin like a ghost.

Bacchus, the classical god of wine.

Pards, leopards; according to legend tigers drew the chariot of Bacchus.

Fays, fairies.

Verdurous glooms, shady, green paths.

NOTES

Incense, sweet smell of flowers.

Guess, try to identify the odours.

Hawthorn, etc., here follows a beautiful catalogue of flowers.

Darkling, in the dark.

The poet wishes to fade away from the world to the accompaniment of song in that moment of supreme bliss.

Requiem, song for the dead.

Clown, villager.

Ruth, the Book of Ruth, Ch. II.

Magic casements, a passage of rare, evocative power in which poetry is transformed into vision.

POEM 220. ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

Realms of gold, literary kingdoms.

Western Islands, works of English literature.

Deep-browed, highly intellectual, the sign of genius.

Chapman (1557-1634), translator of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey". He retained the sublimity and movement of Homer.

Watcher of the skies, astronomer.

Cortez, annotators point out that Balboa, the Spanish explorer, discovered the Pacific on 25th September 1513 and not Cortez the conqueror of Mexico (1485-1554). The slip is insignificant and does not affect the beauty of the simile.

POEM 221. WHEN I HAVE FEARS THAT I MAY CEASE TO BE

A Shakespearean Sonnet with three quatrains and a couplet.

Gleaned, expressed the thoughts.

Charact'ry, written language or signs

Garners, storehouses.

Romance, magic of limitless space.

Chance, unpredictable inspiration.

Faery, magical.

POEM 222. LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

Sedge, water-plant.

And no birds sing, the heavily accented monosyllables come with a tremendous cumulative force at the end of the stanza.

Woebegone, surrounded or closed in by sorrow.

Zone, belt.

Manna dew. Cf. Exodus xvi. 15.

Elfin, fairy-like.

Gloaming, evening twilight.

NOTES

George Darley, 1795-1846

George Darley was an Irishman by birth. He served on the staff of the "London Magazine" and wrote poetry in his spare time. As a poet he is an example of unfulfilled genius. It was said of him that the poet died in youth, but the man survived.

POEM 223. WHEREFORE, UNLAURELLED BOY

Naiad, River-nymph. Every Naiad . . . flows—a reference to the sentimental poetry that was popular at the time.

POEM 224. LINES FROM "NEPENTHE"

Phoenix, a fabled bird that lived for five hundred years and died on a funeral pyre to be re-born from its ashes.

William Cullen Bryant, 1794-1878

William Cullen Bryant, an American poet, was born in Massachusetts. He wrote in a dignified, simple and restrained style.

POEM 225. TO A WATERFOWL

Plashy, marshy.
Marge, margin.

POEM 226. THE INDIAN GIRL'S LAMENT

Indian, here North American Indian.

Mocsen. Variant of moccasin a shoe made of deer-leather worn by North American Indians.

Wampum, small beads made of shells, used as money and woven into a belt as an ornament by American Indians.

Still lakes, the Red Indian conception of heaven.

Thomas Hood, 1799-1845

Known mostly for his humorous verse full of puns. Wrote some serious and powerful songs that effected great social reforms, like "The Song of the Shirt" and the "Bridge of Sighs".

POEM 228. RUTH

Ruth, cf. the Book of Ruth, O.T.

Edgar Allan Poe, 1809-1849

One of the few American authors almost naturalised in English literature, is better known for his short stories. He published

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a volume of poems in 1831 and then turned to stories. As a story writer his influence has been tremendous. His "Tales of Mystery and Imagination" is a classic of its kind that popularised the modern form of the detective story. His poems "The Bells", "The Raven" and "To Helen" are well known.

POEM 229. TO HELEN

Psyche, the Greek personification of the human soul.
Nicæan, belonging to Nicæa—an ancient Greek seaport.
Of yore, ancient.

BOOK VI

This book presents the most lasting productions of the Victorian age the literary achievement of which equals that of any other period in English history. The fourth decade of the nineteenth century marked the opening of a new era. The rise of the machine, the advance of science and the progress in communications, general education and material welfare led to a sanguine temper and sense of elation which are reflected in the poetry of the age. The conflict between the new scientific theories and accepted religious doctrines created a spiritual unrest. Faith in the present and hope for the future formed the keynote of the contemporary belief. Great interest in social welfare which resulted in many much-needed reforms was another aspect of this age. Tennyson, the leading poet of the period, summing up in himself all the characteristics of the age, dominated the literary scene for nearly fifty years. He combined the pictorial and musical elements harmoniously in verse. His poetry is noted for its exquisite, dreamy music and polished style. Browning introduced a note of vigorous individualism and robust optimism in his works. His genius was essentially dramatic but he wrote a large number of beautiful lyrics. Arnold represents the spirit of unrest and agnosticism. His poetry is melancholy and reflective and his style a deliberate reaction against the ornateness of Tennyson. In the latter half of the period another group of poets emerged greatly influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite artists. These poets tried to recapture the simplicity, naturalness and sincerity of early medievalism. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Swinburne and Morris are the typical exemplars of this influence. Their works show traces of continental culture and affiliation.

The poems of Hopkins which are included near the end of this book may seem quite out of tune with the prevailing mood and style. Hopkins in temper and spirit belonged to a later age, though chronologically he formed part of the Victorian era. But his daring innovations in metre and language could not be understood and appreciated by his contemporaries. So they had to wait for a long time till the twentieth century was well on its way to gain a favourable audience.

NOTES

Thomas Babington Macaulay, 1808-1859

Thomas Babington Macaulay exhibited astonishing literary precocity as a child and created a sensation by his "Essay on Milton" published in 1825. Entering political service he came to India where he is chiefly remembered by his Penal Code and introduction of the western system of education. His major work is the "History of England". He united a profound memory with wide scholarship. His narrative poems and ballads had once very great popular appeal. His style is simple and clear.

POEM 230. THE ARMADA

The Armada. The mighty invasion fleet sent out by Philip II of Spain in 1588 under the Duke of Medina Sidonia. Though heavier and better armed the Spanish ships were easily outmanoeuvred by the agile English Navy commanded by Howard. The English sent fire-ships amidst the Spanish galleons, which got into a panic and scattered.

Castile, Province of Spain.

Aurigny's Isle, off Cape Ushant.

Edgumbe, Berwick, etc., the places named in the poem cover the length and breadth of England.

Her Grace. Queen Elizabeth.

The Lion of the Sea, the heraldic lion rampant on the royal standard of the British Sovereigns.

Picard field. Refers to the Battle of Crecy, 1346, in which Edward III defeated Philip VI of France. The French King was assisted by Genoese cross-bowmen, a Bohemian cavalry regiment under King John, and other feudatories of the Holy Roman Empire.

Agincourt, the battle (1415) in which Henry V routed the French King.

Semper Eadem, always the same.

Wards, divisions of the city.

POEM 231. THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

The Battle of Naseby (1645) was fought between the Parliamentarians under Fairfax and the Royalists under Prince Rupert, the nephew of King Charles I. The New Model Army, better organised and led, inflicted a decisive defeat on the King's forces.

Ireton, Oliver Cromwell's son-in-law

Man of Blood, King Charles.

Astley, Marmaduke. Royalist Commanders.

General, Fairfax who led the New Model Army.

German, Prince Rupert, the son of the Elector Palatine

Alsatia, Whitehall, districts in London.

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Skippon, a general of the New Model Army.

Oliver, Cromwell at the head of his cavalry.

Temple Bar, a gate of the city of London where the heads of traitors were fixed.

He, the king.

Lemans, sweethearts.

Belial, Mammon, false gods

She of the seven hills, Rome.

The Houses and the Word, Parliament and the Bible

Robert Stephen Hawker, 1803-1849

Robert Stephen Hawker (1803-1875) "West of England Clergyman" became well known by his "Song of Western Men" and other poems. His "Quest of the Sangraal" is a stately and solemn work.

James Clarence Mangan, 1803-1849

James Clarence Mangan is a poet noted for fluent and melodious versification. Characterised by a rare sincerity and melancholy temper, his poetry embodies the tragedy of Irish hopes and aspirations.

POEM 233. DARK ROSALEEN

This poem is a mystic celebration of the beauties of Erin and the political wrongs suffered by her. Ireland is personified as "Dark Rosaleen".

Winthrop Mackworth Praed, 1802-1839

Winthrop Mackworth Praed ranks with Hood as a real humorous poet. Born in comfortable circumstances and educated at Eton he served for some time as the Editor of the "Etonian". His wide range of scholarship, refinement of tone, and urbane temper are reflected in his poetry which is never touched by sorrow or passion. Very often there is sound, political sense underlying his banter.

POEM 234. SCHOOL AND SCHOOLFELLOWS

Floreat Etona, May Eton flourish.

Sapphics, poem in a classical metre.

Drury's, a boarding-house at Eton.

Stanza 4, the first four lines refer to the game of fives.

Lie before the Speaker, make speeches in the House of Commons.

False quantities, bad Latin verses, containing feet that did not scan properly.

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Sessions, law-courts.

False professions, hypocrisy.

Does Dr. Martext's duty, is a clergyman.

Mant, a Biblical commentator.

Manton, betting book.

Boodle's, a celebrated London club.

Sir Giles, a farmer in a play called "The Maid of the Mill",
in love with the maid.

Houris, an Arabic word meaning, "a beautiful inhabitant of
Paradise".

Francis Sylvester Mahony, 1804-1856

Francis Sylvester Mahony, Jesuit priest and author. Born at Cork. After a classical education followed by religious training at the Jesuit colleges of Amiens and Rome he joined the Society of Jesus. After a wandering and chequered career he started contributing his "Prout" papers to Fraser's Magazine. He did some excellent translations of English verse into Greek, Latin, French, and Italian. His original verse is full of wit and sarcasm but occasionally shows tender seriousness and sentiment.

POEM 235. THE SHANDON BELLS

Adrian's Mole, Adrian or Hadrian was a Roman Emperor of the second century A.D. His reign was one of the happiest periods in Roman history. He erected many magnificent works in various parts of the Empire including the temple of Venus in Rome, a Mausoleum and a Villa at Tibur.

Cork, a seaport in the South-west of Ireland.

Vatican, the residence of the Pope in Rome.

Notre Dame, famous cathedral in Paris.

Dome of Peter, St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome.

Kiosk, open pavilion or summer house.

Saint Sophia, a famous mosque in Istanbul.

POEM 236. A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

Pan, a Greek God of universal nature, flocks, and open spaces. He was represented as half-man and half-goat. As the god of music he invented the syrinx or flute. He inspired sudden and unreasonable terror; hence the word "panic".

The making of the flute symbolically signifies the creation of a poet. Just as the reed is pierced and scooped out to make a flute a poet is made different from other men. He is inspired by the gods and becomes their mouth-piece. His acute sensibility makes him easily affected by the pain and suffering in the world; and his song is the outcome of sorrow.

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Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1807-1882

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, a representative American poet, was born at Portland, Maine. His Red Indian saga, "Hiawatha," came out in 1855.

POEM 237. THE SLAVE'S DREAM

This is one of the poems that helped in the Anti-Slavery movement for the emancipation of slaves.

Rice, in the plantations where the slave worked.

Niger, West African river.

Caffre, a South African race.

River-Horse, Hippopotamus.

It, sound of the lion's roar.

Driver's whip, in those days the white masters whipped their black slaves.

POEM 238. SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT

Sir Humphrey Gilbert, 1539-1583, was the half-brother of Sir Walter Raleigh, the Elizabethan Courtier. He became famous as an explorer and colonizer. In 1583 he took possession of part of Newfoundland but was lost in a shipwreck on the return voyage.

Corsair, pirate.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, 1809-1894

Oliver Wendell Holmes graduated from Harvard and started the study of medicine. His series of prose essays entitled "Autocrat at the Breakfast Table", etc., brought him considerable reputation. He published a volume of poems in 1836.

POEM 239. THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS

Chambered Nautilus. This poem was first included in the "Autocrat at the Breakfast Table" (1858). The title-phrase refers to a mollusc that starts life in a shell and goes on building larger shells as it grows. The poet has made it symbolic of human endeavour and development. He wants us to enlarge and broaden our lives with experience.

POEM 240. DEDICATION POEM

Sings the immortality of the poet.

Stanza 3, alludes to poets who drew their inspiration from the east and enriched western literature.

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Edward Fitzgerald, 1809-1883

Edward Fitzgerald spent his life almost as a recluse, but became famous later by his translation of the Persian poet, Omar, of the 11th century A.D. The first version appeared in 1859 but it underwent many subsequent revisions. Though as a translation it may not satisfy the purist yet in a remarkable way it has caught the spirit and emotional appeal of the original with its deep warm sympathies and recreated the atmosphere which mere verbal parallelism could not have done. The mysticism and sensuous fatalism of Omar, his ridicule of ascetic renunciation and his view of life opposed to the fanaticism and hypocrisy of his age along with his passion and banter, solemnity and laughter, and fertile imagery live again in great beauty in Fitzgerald's verse. The rolling quatrain with the first, second, and fourth lines rhyming and the third unrhymed is an original contribution to poetic form.

POEM 241. STANZAS FROM "THE RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM"

These selections have been taken from the first version. The first two stanzas emphasize the wisdom of making the most of the present moment without caring for the future. The next six stanzas deal with the impermanence of life and the transience of worldly glory.

Jamshyd, a legendary king of Persia.

Bahram, another Persian ruler of the 5th century A.D. Stanzas nine to thirteen expound the darkness and mystery of life, which, according to the poet, shines as a short-lived spark in the midst of impenetrable darkness. The poet sums up the result of his own futile researches after truth and incidentally mocks at dogmatic philosophy which complacently seeks to interpret secrets about which the human mind with its natural limitations can know nothing. This agnosticism which professes ignorance of the origin and ultimate purpose and destination of life is not irreconcilable with faith in an infinite transcending power.

Doctor and Saint, Omar studied medicine and philosophy in early life.

The succeeding three stanzas express a deep-rooted fatalism. Human life is compared to a ball which destiny knocks about here and there.

Field, field of life, the universe.

Gin, mechanical trap.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1809-1892

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, the most popular and representative poet of the Victorian age, who succeeded Wordsworth in 1850

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as poet laureate, had a distinguished academic career at Cambridge. He published two volumes of poems of unequal workmanship in 1830 and 1833. Then followed a long period of literary apprenticeship in which the poet perfected his mastery of form and style. 1842 saw the publication of "Poems" covering a wide range of topics, classical and modern, dramatic studies like "Oenone", "Ulysses" and "Sir Galahad" and philosophical poems like "Two Voices". He also wrote a long narrative poem "The Princess" interspersed with several lovely lyrics. His major work is the philosophical elegy, "In Memoriam" on the death of his friend, Hallam. His best poem as a laureate is the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington". His final ambitious venture, "The Idylls of the King" achieved great contemporary fame. A typical Englishman with a conservative outlook, exalting the sanctity of domestic life and social morals, Tennyson reflects the dominant thoughts and tendencies of his period. As a poet he is a finished artist with superb command of metre and form. He polished his work to perfection, always aiming at the exquisite, jewelled phrase. Like Pope he has given many familiar quotations to the language.

POEM 243. THE LADY OF SHALOTT

This is a poem remarkable for its pictorial appeal. The natural descriptions reveal minute attention to detail. Some would see a symbolic meaning in this work of gossamer fancy. The germ of the story is taken from Malory's "Morte D'Arthur".

PART I

Wold, open land.

Camelot, legendary city where King Arthur held his court.

Willows whiten, the under surface of the leaves of the willow is white.

Aspen, the leaves of the aspen tremble in the wind.

PART II

Shadows, reflections of outside scenes.

Long-haired, long hair was the sign of noble birth in those days.

PART III

The warmth and colour in this part harmonise with the awakening of love in the lady's heart.

Greaves, armour for the lower part of the leg.

Lancelot, the most famous knight in King Arthur's Court.

Blazon'd baldric, ornamental belt.

From the bank and from the river, the Lady of Shalott saw in her mirror Lancelot on the bank and his reflection in the water.

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PART IV

The curse takes effect. Nature seems to mourn for the lady.
The atmosphere is tinged with melancholy.

Complaining, making a moaning noise.

Glassy, with fixed, staring eyes.

POEM 244. CHORIC SONG FROM "THE LOTOS-EATERS"

This is based on an incident mentioned in Homer's "Odyssey" Book IX. Odysseus on his homeward voyage came to the land of the lotos-eaters where it seemed always afternoon. The main food of the people of the place was the 'lotos-fruit, which acted like an opiate on the eater and induced a mood of dreamy forgetfulness. The sailors of Odysseus ate the fruit and forgot about their voyage to their homeland. The lotos was a native of Africa. The poem expresses a mood of weariness and desire for rest and peace.

Choric song, this passage is sung by the sailors in chorus.

Blown, fully blossomed

First, best and noblest.

Roof and crown, greatest in creation.

Fast-rooted, the flower is contrasted with the wandering mariners.

All things, our achievements and ideals must be left behind after death.

Amber, colour of the sunset.

Mild-minded melancholy, calm thoughtfulness.

Old faces, of the friends of childhood, now vanished.

Urn of brass, vessel for the ashes of a dead person.

Cold, not welcoming.

Inherit, have succeeded to our possessions.

Let . . . remain, the sailors do not desire to set right the disorder.

Pilot-stars, the Pole star, helpful in navigation to find the direction.

Amaranth (unwithering), a red, unfading flower mentioned in classical legends.

Moly, a white, medicinal plant given by Hermes to Odysseus to ward off Circe's enchantment.

Dewy echoes, echoes from caves oozing with moisture.

Acanthus, plant with hanging leaves.

Only to hear, to listen to the lulling murmur of the sea from a distance.

Mellower, grown softer.

Seething free, appearing to boil over.

Equal mind, fixed determination.

Careless, not caring for ; an Epicurean idea,

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Bolts, thunderbolts of Zeus.

Little dues, small profit.

Elysian, belonging to Elysium, the heaven in Greek mythology.

Nectar, drink of the gods.

POEM 245. YOU ASK ME WHY

A noble tribute to England.

POEM 246. LINES FROM "LOCKSLEY HALL"

A far-seeing vision of a future united world.

POEM 247. A FAREWELL

The poet bids farewell to the brook flowing near his parental home at Somersby.

POEM 248. BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

This poem visualises the place where the poet's friend, Hallam, lies buried.

POEM 249. SIR GALAHAD

Galahad, a knight of King Arthur's round table, noted for purity of life and noble ideals. He went in search of the Holy Grail.

Casques, armour for the head.

Drawn above, deep piety is the moving force behind his chivalrous deeds.

Holy Grail, the cup which caught the last drops of Christ's blood. It was supposed to have been brought to England by Joseph of Arimathea. Many knights of King Arthur's Court went in search of it. It was also the subject of many mediaeval legends.

Stole, ornamental band or scarf worn on the head by ecclesiastics of the Roman and the English churches.

POEM 250 (ii). SONGS FROM "THE PRINCESS"—NOW SLEEPS THE CRIMSON PETAL

Danaë. Danae was the daughter of the King of Argos. She was confined by her father in a brazen tower. Visited by Zeus in the form of a golden shower she bore a son, Perseus, the slayer of the Gorgon.

POEM 251 (ii). STANZAS FROM "IN MEMORIAM"

Often-quoted farewell to the old year and welcome to the new one.

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POEM 252. COME INTO THE GARDEN, MAUD

Planet of love, Venus or Hesperus, the evening or morning star.

Passion flower, the flower of a tropical plant of South America, bearing in the anthers marks resembling the symbols of Christ's passion.

Larkspur, garden plant.

Pimpernel, an English wild flower.

POEM 253. THE BROOK

Coot, a waterfowl.

Hern, heron.

Thorp, village.

Fret, cut into, wear away.

Bicker, run noisily.

Mallow, a plant with purple flowers.

Grayling, a silver-grey freshwater fish.

POEM 254. THE REVENGE

Sir Richard Grenville (1541-1591) was a British Commander who sailed in 1591 on his ship, the "Revenge" of 5,000 tons with a squadron under Howard to intercept a Spanish treasure fleet from the West Indies. Near Flores, one of the Azores, a group of islands in the Atlantic Ocean, the English heard news of a heavy Spanish armed fleet bearing down upon them. Howard, not wishing to engage an enemy superior in strength, stood out to sea. But the "Revenge" under Grenville was delayed and had to fight its way through fifteen converging enemy ships. Grenville was captured after a brave fight and taken aboard the Spanish flag-ship. He died at San Pablo.

Don, Spanish nobleman.

Pinnace, a small, two-masted vessel.

Galleon, big, Spanish ship.

Main, sea.

Robert Browning, 1812-1889

Robert Browning, unlike his contemporary, Tennyson, achieved recognition only very slowly. Though born of moderately rich parents he did not receive a systematic education. His learning was self-acquired. His first work "Pauline" published in 1833 was not a success. He wrote many dramas which also did not produce a favourable impression. In the meantime he had met and married Elizabeth Barrett in 1846. His best work is contained in "Men and Women" (1855), "Bells and Pomegranates" and "Dramatis Personae" (1864). The enormous poem "The Ring and the Book" appeared in 1869. His last

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volume "Asolando" contained some beautiful lyrics. His characteristic poetic form is the dramatic monologue in which he lays bare the speaker's soul. He is also one of the greatest of lyric poets and a delicate interpreter of the romantic passion. His philosophical outlook is tinged with a robust optimism. For sheer volume and variety, fulness of action and thought, depth of passion and vigorous, rugged beauty his poetry is unequalled. His obscurity of diction is due to extreme compression, inversions and omission of articles and prepositions which have scared away many enthusiasts. But when these critical barriers are overcome, what a rich harvest awaits the discerning reader!

POEM 255. PIPPA'S SONGS

Taken from "Pippa Passes" a fine example of Browning's optimism. The poor child, Pippa, passes singing through Asolo. Her song is heard by different groups of people at critical moments in their lives.

POEM 256. HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

A loving tribute to the beauty of the English countryside written from Italy on his first visit in 1838.

Dower, wealth which they love to gather.

POEM 257. HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

Praises the valour shown by the English sailors at Trafalgar and Gibraltar.

Cape Saint Vincent, the south western extremity of Portugal. Near it the Spanish fleet was defeated by Rodney in 1780 and Jervis in 1797.

POEM 258. THE LABORATORY

The story is laid in pre-revolutionary Paris of the late 17th and early 18th centuries (under the "Ancien Régime"). The speaker is a lady who seeks to poison her successful rival in revenge. Her feverish excitement is reflected in the rapidity of the verse movement. This poem is one of the "Dramatic Romances and Lyrics" published in 1845.

Filigree, ornamental flower work with gold or silver wire.

POEM 259. THE PATRIOT

A bitter reflection on the fickleness of popular favour. A leader who had been once hailed as the saviour of the people is now condemned and being led to his execution.

Leaped at the sun. At the height of his popularity if he had asked for the sun the people would have gladly given it. But

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instead it was he who had given them everything they wanted and made all sacrifices.

Shamble's gate, near the place of execution.

Note the contrast between the first stanza and the fourth.

Stanza 6. The speaker wishes that he had dropped down dead at the height of his triumph: But then God would have demanded of him a strict account of what he had made of his life in return for the success and happiness the world had given him. Now that the world is killing him he could hope for justice from God. Divine justice would compensate for popular betrayal.

POEM 260. CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME

The poem is an imaginative expansion of a line from Edgar's song in "King Lear" III. 4. Browning has taken the line unaltered as the title for his poem. It presents a kind of tragic parody of romantic chivalry—a mood of frustration and disillusionment. The barren scenery all round reflects the bitter discontent of the wandering knight when he nears the end of his quest.

Childe, noble youth.

Askance, sideways.

Neither pride nor hope, an attitude of complete indifference and resignation.

The Spring, his heart seems to rejoice at the end of his weary quest. In his mood of disillusioned frustration he is not inclined to find fault with his heart for he has a premonition of failure—a feeling that his venture is foredoomed.

To wit, namely.

Estray, some wandering animal.

Cockle, **Spurge**, vegetation in the plain.

Burr, prickly, clinging seed vessel of certain plants.

It nothing skills, it makes no difference.

Bents, stalks of grass.

Pashing, walking on wet ground.

Calcine, burn

Colloped, with skin in folds.

Dank, damp.

Plash, wet mud.

Cirque, round arena.

Penned, shut in.

Mews, stable.

Brewage, decoction, liquid extract.

Brake, instrument of torture.

Pits, forces to fight.

Tophet's tool. Tophet was a place in a valley adjoining Jerusalem where refuse was burnt. Later the name became synonymous with hell.

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Rankling, rotting.

Apollyon's bosom-friend, Apollyon is a monster described in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress", winged, covered with scales and breathing fire and smoke.

Slug-horn. The poet coined this word from the Gaelic "slogan"—a war-cry.

POEM 261. THE GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL

This poem reflects the enthusiasm for and delight in learning felt by scholars just after the Renaissance. The parentheses contain the remarks of other students which do not interrupt but assist in the development of the theme.

Stanza 1. The grammarian's pupils are bearing his body to the grave early in the morning. They feel that the pure, rarefied air at the mountain top would be the congenial surrounding to their master who had always dwelt in a world of abstractions.

Crofts, fields.

'Ware the beholders ! The speaker exhorts his companions to march with dignity for others would be watching them

Stanza 2. This describes the scholar's earthly life.

Apollo. He was handsome in his youth like the god, Apollo ; he was content to live in obscurity.

Touch, some disease unheeded at first.

Moan, he did not complain, but lived resigned to his lot.

Stanza 3. Actual Life. Another man when realising that the end was near would have stopped his pursuits and indulged in worldly pleasures. But this scholar felt that he was only on the fringe of knowledge and wanted to explore it fully.

Stanza 4. What's Time. His pupils implored him to take rest, but according to him, only animals should live for the moment ; man with an immortal soul has hereafter to compensate for the time lost in this world ; so he would finish what he had begun.

Calculus, stone in the bladder, causing extreme pain.

Tussis, cough.

Soul-Hydroptic, acute thirst caused by dropsy.

Stanza 5. Perfect, god would make amends in Heaven for the toil and trouble on earth.

Instalment, by hankering after earthly rewards man decreases his benefits in the next world.

Stanza 6. Rattle, death-rattle.

Settled, even at the point of death and during the preceding stages of acute physical disability like partial paralysis he defined the nature and functions of the Greek particles.

Hoti, Greek word meaning "that" or "because".

Oun, means both "then" and "now".

De, has two meanings—the ordinary meaning of "but" and the enclitic one of "toward" (enclitic = subjoined or hanging ;

NOTES

when enclitic, the particle is not an independent word but becomes part of another word). The scholar formulated rules for distinguishing the two forms.

Purlieus, places frequented by birds.

POEM 262. PROSPICE

Prospice, "Look forward"—an exhortation of self-assertion and defiance of death.

Summit, life's end, there is one more struggle to be won.

Soul of my Soul, a tender and moving address to his wife, Elizabeth Barrett, who had died in 1861.

Emily Bronte, 1818-1848

Emily Bronte has won a permanent place in literature by her novel, "Wuthering Heights". She also wrote a handful of verses which evoked unstinted praise from a few enthusiasts at the time of publication.

POEM 263. THE OLD STOIC

The Stoic. The follower of a school of philosophy founded by Zeno in the 3rd century B.C., stressing mental and physical discipline, austerity of life and suppression of emotions.

Arthur Hugh Clough, 1819-1861

Arthur Hugh Clough, the subject of Matthew Arnold's elegy, "Thyrsis" was a product of mid-Victorian scepticism, which he reproduced in his poetry. Poetically he belonged to the "Spasmodic School" characterised by extreme emotional intensity, hatred of convention, and tendency to avoid the beaten track. When at Oxford he came under the influence of Newman, but the reaction that set in later left him shaken to the very foundations of his faith. Intellectually he had much in common with Arnold. His shorter poems strike a personal and speculative note.

POEM 264. SAY NOT, THE STRUGGLE NAUGHT AVALLETH

Exercises a peculiar appeal as the poet's affirmation of spiritual faith more enduring than the facile optimism of others.

Charles Kingsley, 1819-1875

Charles Kingsley was a clergyman who first wrote verse and then changed over to fiction. Most of his poetry was composed before 1858. Saintsbury considers him the best among

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the minor poets of the 19th century. He had the gift of pure song which enabled him to establish lasting fame on very slender output.

POEM 266. ODE TO THE NORTH-EAST WIND

Zephyr, the classical name for the west wind. The North-east wind is the bitterest and coldest blowing in England. The poet believes that the Norsemen of old, nursed by this wind, supplied the source of English strength.

Holt, woodland.

Bent, wide, grassy plain.

Dappled Darlings, fox-hounds.

Drives, etc. The North-east wind is the driving force for all exploration, adventure, and colonization.

Fathers, the ancient Norsemen were supposed to attack only in times of storm.

Wind of God. This address appears strange in a clergyman for it seems to invest a force of destruction with a divine mission.

Walt Whitman, 1819-1892

Walt Whitman, born at Long Island and educated at Brooklyn became later a school teacher and the editor of a magazine successively. His early poems were conventional in form and mediaeval in atmosphere and did not foreshadow the later revolution he was to effect in structure and style. His "Leaves of Grass" (1855) was one of the strongest motive powers of modern free verse in its freedom from rhyme, metre, and accent. Its unit of rhythm is the phrase. It is full of repetition and rhetorical mannerisms. Emerson and Swinburne have paid a noble tribute to Whitman's genius.

POEM 267. O CAPTAIN, MY CAPTAIN

This was first published in "Sequel to Drum-taps", 1867 as an elegiac commemoration of Abraham Lincoln's death. Its genuine pathos, regular stanzaic pattern, rhymes, and refrain have made it deservedly popular.

Ship. Symbolic of the American Union that was threatened with extinction by the Civil War. Lincoln's life mission was to preserve its unity. He fulfilled his task but was shot dead at the height of his triumph by a madman.

Matthew Arnold, 1822-1888

Matthew Arnold, poet, prose-writer, and critic, was the son of Dr. Arnold of Rugby whom he has immortalised in his "Rugby Chapel". After a distinguished academic career he became a

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fellow of Oriel and then served as Professor of Poetry at Oxford between 1857 and 1867. He gained a select and discriminating audience by his "Strayed Reveller and Other Poems" in 1849. He followed this up with a volume of "Poems" (1853) which was introduced by a remarkable preface. He attempted also a classical tragedy "Merope" (1858). His subsequent preoccupation with critical writings restricted his poetical output which received a few additions by "New Poems" in 1867. His "Essays in Criticism" and "On Translating Homer" contain some of the best critical writing after Coleridge in the 19th century. His poems clearly reveal the influence of Wordsworth. He had also something of the Greek spirit in his emotional restraint and sense of form. Lacking in intensity of feeling, his poetry is characterised by intellectual reflection, doubt, and agnosticism. His style is, in a way, a reaction against the ornate mellifluousness of Tennyson.

POEM 268. QUIET WORK

The central idea of the poem is characteristic of Arnold—unostentatious, calm, devoted, and sustained performance of duty.

Fitful, applies both to uproar and toil; human labour is intermittent and surrounded by a fanfare of publicity, while Nature works on silently and incessantly.

POEM 269. SHAKESPEARE

Probably the best and most magnificent homage to Shakespeare.

POEM 270. CALLICLES' LAST SONG ON ETNA

Sung by Callicles, a young harp-player, at the end of "Empedocles on Etna".

Helicon, mountain in Greece, supposed to be the haunt of the Muses.

Thisbe, a town of Boeotia in Greece.

Thyme, sweet-smelling shrub.

Nine, the muses or goddesses who presided over poetry and the fine arts.

Olympus, the dwelling-place of the Greek gods.

POEM 272. THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

This is the best of Arnold's shorter narrative poems. Pervaded by a brooding melancholy, it is noteworthy for its pathos and description of scenery. It deals with the tragedy in a merman's life. The merman loved and married a human wife, but she later deserted him. This idea occurs quite frequently in German myths and folk-tales.

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Merman, a mythical creature half-man and half-fish according to popular belief; but here is conceived of as completely human in form. It was thought that the mermen had no souls and that human beings who married them also lost their chance of salvation.

White Horses, a poetic description of the waves echoing a classical idea.

Sand-Strewn Caverns. The lines subtly suggest the transition from the natural atmosphere of human habitation to the silent dimlit ocean-depths inhabited by strange, slow-moving monsters.

Spent Lights, faint light filtering to the sea-bed from above.

Ooze, soft, plashy mud at the bottom of the sea.

Lose my Soul, on account of her marriage with the soulless merman.

Sea-stocks, sea-plants on the shore.

Spring-Tides, high waves.

Holy Well, baptismal font.

Wheel, spinning-wheel.

Blanched. Whiteness, a favourite epithet with Arnold.

Hie, go.

POEM 273. REQUIESCAT

An exquisite dirge.

Requiescat, may he or she rest.

Laps, wraps.

POEM 274. THE SCHOLAR GIPSY

The theme is taken from Glanvil's "Vanity of Dogmatizing" (1661) which tells of an Oxford scholar, who, due to poverty, was forced to abandon his studies and join a group of gypsies. Glanvil also describes the wanderings of the Oxford scholar in search of a simple life. The idea peculiarly appealed to Arnold and he gave it elegiac form. This ranks with the great pastoral elegies of English literature. It is also notable for the beautiful descriptions of Oxford scenery it contains.

Wattled Cotes, sheep-shelters made of cane.

Bawling Fellows, sheep-dogs.

Rack, strain.

Quest, search for the Oxford Scholar who was supposed to haunt the locality.

Glanvil's Book, mentioned in the introductory paragraph.

"Pregnant Parts". Quoted from Glanvil; "fertile with ideas".

Knocking, trying to win a scholarship.

Hurst, wooded height.

Ingle-Bench, seat in the chimney-corner.

Boors, peasants.

NOTES

Cumnor, a village near Oxford.

Green-muffled, covered by green leaves.

Bablock-Hithe, ferry in the Upper Thames.

Lasher, a pool below a water-mill.

Scarlet Patches, red due to autumn.

Just-Pausing Genius. The spirit that presides over a man's life; when we are tired out with our endless labours, we stop our endeavours and look back upon our past existence to assess its worth. During the cessation of our activities, the spirit also has a period of rest.

What We, Alas, Have Not, singleness of purpose.

Term, limit.

Casual Creeds, not firm convictions, but superficially-held beliefs.

Spark from Heaven, the scholar was trying to develop the power to divine the thoughts of others by imagination.

One. As this word was printed with a capital letter in the first edition of the poem commentators fruitlessly speculated on the identity of the person referred to and suggested Tennyson, Wordsworth, and Goethe, none of whom exactly corresponds to the description.

Anodynes, means to relieve spiritual pain.

Waive, give up.

Palsied, paralysed

Dido, Queen of Carthage who killed herself on being deserted by Aeneas whom she loved. Virgil narrates in the "Aeneid" (Bk. VI) that when "Aeneas" (the "false friend" of the next line in the stanza) met the shade of Dido in the under-world the latter turned away from him in anger.

Nursing the Unconquerable Hope, a justly famous passage; the poet exhorts the scholar, to cherish his indomitable ideal and ambition and to continue to frequent inaccessible remote corners where none would disturb his rest.

Silvered, whitened by the moonlight.

Tyrian Trader, a magnificent simile on the Homeric pattern that concludes the poem with a restful note. It has an independent, pictorial value. It contrasts the people of an older generation characterised by simple life and solid worth with the young moderns who possess shallow and superficial attractions.

Phoenicians, the famous ancient traders who came before the Greeks.

Aegean Isles, Greek archipelago.

Chian, from the island of Chios in the Aegean sea. Note the attractive but perishable goods of the Grecian intruder.

Shook out more sail, finding his markets captured by the younger and more successful rival the Tyrian extended his trade to other shores.

Midland waters, Mediterranean Sea.

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Syrtes, sand-bank to the North-West of Africa.
Western straits, straits of Gibraltar.
Iberians, Spaniards.
Corded Bales, Substantial goods of lasting value.

William Johnson Cory, 1823-1892

William Johnson Cory, schoolmaster and author, was educated at Eton and Cambridge and later served at Eton as a tutor. He retired in 1872 and devoted himself to writing. His poems entitled "Ionica" (1858) show genuine lyrical power.

POEM 276. MIMNERMUS IN CHURCH

Mimnermus, an elegiac poet of Colophon, 7th century B.C. who sang of the pleasures of youth and the horrors of old age and popularised the hedonistic philosophy. The speaker in this poem represents the philosophical temper and attitude of the ancient poet.

Sexless Souls, according to the scriptures souls that rise from the dead lost the attributes of sex.

Sydney Dobell, 1824-1874

Sydney Dobell, son of a wine merchant, devoted his leisure to travel and literature. His first drama "The Roman" (1850) achieved great success, but the second "Balder" (1854) was torn to pieces by the critics. He was the most unequal of writers, mawkish sentiment being his chief defect. Capable, on occasions, of rising to sublime heights, he often plunged into the depths of bathos. He was most happy in his minor poems.

POEM 277. KEITH OF RAVELSTON

The Keiths came of an ancient Scotch family renowned in legend and song. Some of them were hereditary Great-Marshal. Some were staunch Jacobites and took part in the rising of 1715.

POEM 278. A COUNTRY SONG, A CHANTED CALENDAR

Wind-flower, The Anemone.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1828-1882

Dante Gabriel Rossetti was the son of an Italian poet and critic, settled in England. He showed early leanings towards art and helped to found "The Pre-Raphaelite" brotherhood of painters. He published his "Poems" in 1870 and "Ballads and Sonnets" in 1871. His sonnet-sequence "The House of

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Life " is one of the best of its kind in English. Equal to Tennyson in craftsmanship he had in addition a limited dramatic talent. His gift for evoking musical cadences and painting delicate word-pictures was extraordinary. In temper and outlook he belonged to the middle ages into which he sought to escape from contemporary ills and upheavals.

POEM 280. THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

This was inspired by his wife. It shows distinct Italian influences, especially of Dante. Its pictorial beauty, ornate language, verbal music, and mediaeval mysticism have made it deservedly a masterpiece in English poetry.

Damozel, young lady.

Three Lilies, Seven Stars, mystical numbers.

Service, to the Mother of God.

White Rose, symbol of that service.

Her seemed, it seemed to her.

Choristers, angels singing God's praise.

Ten Years of Years, to the lover on earth who has lost his lady time seems to move slowly.

Ether, not used in the modern sense ; signifies a spiritual form of matter.

Ridge the void, make wavy lines.

Fretful midge, small insect, moving quickly.

Circling charm, limit of heaven which cannot be passed.

The stars . . . sang, the music of the spheres ; also a reference to the scriptural " when the morning stars sang together. "

My side, the side of the lover standing on earth.

Two prayers, cf. " If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask it shall be done for them " (The Bible).

Aureole, Halo of light on a saint's head.

Wells of light, " And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God " (Revelations).

Shrine, the holy of holies in heaven.

Lamps, seven lamps representing the seven spirits of God, mentioned in the " Revelations ".

Cloud, it was believed that prayers changed into incense in heaven.

Mystic tree, the tree of Life (Revelations xxii. 2).

Dove, The Holy Ghost.

Endless unity, in a double sense, of the soul with God, and of sundered souls reunited in heaven.

Cecily, etc., a masterly choice and arrangement of proper names to produce ethereal music. The names indicate saints and martyrs of the early centuries of Christianity.

Citherns and citoles, stringed instruments.

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Christina Rossetti, 1830-1894

Christina Rossetti was younger sister of Dante Gabriel. She showed a deep, religious spirit and remarkable poetic talents even in her girlhood. Some of her poems were privately printed in 1847. Her first published volume was "Goblin Market" (1862). This was succeeded by "Prince's Progress" (1866), "A Pageant and other poems" (1881) and the posthumous work "New Poems" (1896). Religion was the controlling influence in her work, colouring and vivifying it. Her secluded life restricted her choice of themes, but helped to strengthen her emotional control. In quality and output she remains one of the greatest of women poets in English.

POEM 281. A BIRTHDAY

This expresses the fullness of heart arising from happy love. Its imagery is oriental in splendour.

Watered Shoot, growing near a waterside.

Halcyon, calm; it was believed in ancient days that the halcyon or kingfisher had the power to charm and quieten wind and wave for about a fortnight in mid-winter during her breeding season.

Vair, many-coloured fur.

Charles Stuart Calverley, 1831-1884

Charles Stuart Calverley was the chief writer of humorous verse in the second half of the 19th century. After a distinguished academic career he was called to the Bar but his professional work was cut short by an accident that incapacitated him in 1867. He published "Verses and Translations" (1862) followed by "Fly Leaves" (1872). He is the parodist *par excellence* in English poetry.

POEM 283. LINES ON HEARING THE ORGAN

Organ, a mechanical, musical instrument.

Grinder, one who operates such an organ, generally an Italian.

Barbary's Nimble Son, an African monkey; organ grinders in England usually carried monkeys with them to entertain the public.

Sirius, the dog-star, associated with hot days in summer.

Shoon, old form of shoes.

Four . . . Airs, the machine repeated the four songs indefinitely.

Anio, river in Italy.

St. Giles, a poor district in London.

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Grosvenor Square, a rich district.

Flunkey, footman.

Simoom, Sirocco, hot sand-storms occurring in Africa or South America.

Eacomium, commendation.

William Morris, 1834-1896

William Morris came of a prosperous middle class family and intended to take orders, but became an architect in 1856. He turned to painting in 1858. His friendship with Rossetti brought him in contact with the Pre-Raphaelites. His "Defence of Guenevere" shows the influence of mediaevalism. "Life and Death of Jason" (1866) though classical in theme was mediaeval in atmosphere and colouring. "The Earthly Paradise" was published in four volumes between 1868 and 1870. After Chaucer, Morris recaptured the power of masterly story-telling. His verse runs with an easy flow. In later years he was pre-occupied with social and political reforms and the establishment of an ideal state.

POEM 284. A GARDEN BY THE SEA

Garden-close, an enclosed garden.

Algernon Charles Swinburne, 1837-1909

Algernon Charles Swinburne, another famous member of the Pre-Raphaelite group, came into prominence in 1865 with his classical tragedy "Atalanta in Calydon". His "Poems and Ballads" (1866) aroused a storm of protest by its paganism and frank treatment of some of the unhealthy forms of human passion. But the splendid diction and grand orchestral music of the verses silenced criticism. "Songs before Sunrise" (1871) was mostly devoted to Italy and other political themes. He produced another classical tragedy "Erechtheus" in 1876 and a few, long, narrative poems. His scholarship was most profound and helped him in his considerable work. He also wrote some wonderful sea-poems and songs for children. The lyrical impulse surged up pure and spontaneous in his poems. The English language danced and sang in his hands as it had never done before. He had unequalled metrical mastery and contributed several new forms to English poetry. His very metrical facility led to uncontrolled prolixity which in turn produced a vagueness in thought and imagery which all his verbal magic cannot hide. But this should not mislead us into the assumption that his poetry has no profundity. The weight of thought is hidden by the ease with which his verse soars high on inspiration. He has been sometimes called "Shelley re-born" but his music is like a complex organ compared to the fluting melody of Shelley.

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POEM 285. THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

Proserpine was the daughter of Ceres, the goddess of fertility in Nature. She was abducted by Pluto, the king of the underworld and became his queen; hence her association with death. The poem expresses a mood of extreme weariness and longing for peace.

Coppice, underwood.

Earth, Ceres, the mother of Proserpine. It was believed that when Proserpine came back to her mother from the underworld the earth rejoiced and the spring blossomed.

POEM 286. A FORSAKEN GARDEN

Coign, corner.

Henry Austin Dobson, 1840-1921

Henry Austin Dobson acquired a great reputation for society verse and imitation of difficult French poetic forms. His poetry shows the temper and influence of the 18th century. His "Vignettes in Rhyme" (1873) "Proverbs in Porcelain" (1877) and "Old World Idylls" (1883) reveal an airy grace and elegance, reminiscent of a bygone age.

POEM 287. THE LADIES OF ST. JAMES'S

Ombre, a card game.

Shrovetide, the period before Lent when people were shriven.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy, 1844-1881

Arthur O'Shaughnessy, an official of the British Museum, became popular with "Epic of Women and other poems" (1870) revealing traces of French influence. "Lays of France" (1872) "Music and Moonlight" (1874) showed that his poetic springs were already running dry. His poetry is narrow in range but is compensated by melody echoing the cadences of Swinburne.

POEM 288. ODE

Nineveh, ancient city on the Tigris, Capital of the Assyrian Empire.

Babel, Babylon.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, 1844-1889

Born in mid-Victorian times, Hopkins was far ahead of his age in originality and inspiration. During his stay at Oxford he came under the influence of Cardinal Newman

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and entered the Catholic Church. This exercised a severe literary discipline on him. "The Wreck of the Deutschland" (1875) was so daring in conception, style, and versification that it could not be published in journals of that period. His friend and literary executor, Robert Bridges, to whom he submitted his poems, kept them back and published them only in 1918 to ensure a receptive audience. Hopkins's rhyme-scheme and liberties with grammar and vocabulary create considerable obscurity. He was a metrical innovator adopting a scheme in which he counted the accented syllables, and left the unaccepted to take care of themselves, to which he gave the curious name of *sprung rhythm*. He himself stated that his poems should be read aloud to be appreciated. He is the most powerful single influence on modern English poetry.

POEM 289. THE LOSS OF THE EURYDICE

The "Eurydice", a ship of the British Navy foundered off the Isle of Wight on 24th March 1878, when she was returning from a training cruise for young seamen. The tragedy of so many young men cut off in their prime when they were spiritually unprepared for death profoundly affected Hopkins. The poet, who had been inactive for some time, wrote this poem at a white heat of emotion. Some of the difficulties here are due to newly-coined compound words and omission of relative pronouns. But in his letters to Bridges and Canon Dixon the poet himself has explained many passages.

Concerned Thee, the shipwreck affected the salvation of several souls.

Furled, struck down and buried. In a letter to Bridges, Hopkins wrote "You are to suppose a stroke or blast in a forest of 'hearts of oak' . . . which at one blow lays them low and buries them in broken earth".

Flockbells . . . Burial, the bells of sheep grazing on the sea-facing slopes of the high downs rang the knell for the drowned sailors.

Precious, the ship carried human beings more valuable than gold or treasure.

Bole and Bloom, trunk and flowers; old and young men.

Blow . . . Land, the ship was not struck down by a storm from the sea but from a land gale.

Lanced Fire. "A bright sun was darting fire from the bay of heaven" (Hopkins in a letter to Canon Dixon).

Boreas, the clear March day belied its brightness for despite the sunshine, the northwind wrecked the ship.

Hailropes, ropy clouds raining hail or the hailstones (heavens-gravel) falling in ropy lines.

Wolf-Snow, bitterly cold storm-snow.

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Carisbrook Keep, Norman Castle on the Isle of Wight.
Appledurcombe, Ventnor, places on the island.
Boniface Down, the highest point on the island.
Marcus Hare, the Captain who went down with the ship.
Champ-white, like the foam from a horse's mouth.
After-draught, the sucking whirlpool formed by the sinking ship.

Gullies, swallows.

Wrings, struggles.

Sea-swirl, surging, hungry sea.

Brown-as-dawning, tan-coloured.

I deplore my people, the drowned sailor makes the poet think of the shipwreck of thousands of souls due to their straying away from the Catholic Church.

Ruinous shrines, Churches and monasteries despoiled of their property at the Reformation.

Wildworth, reckless courage and natural untamed manliness of the dead sailors.

Blown so sweet, that bloomed so sweetly.

Unchrist, lacking the grace of Christ.

Riving, the division of the nation due to the Protestant movement.

Wender, pilgrim.

Milk, the Milky Way.

Walsingham, noted for its shrine of the Virgin, a place of pilgrimage. Writing to Bridges, Hopkins says, "In Catholic times, Walsingham Way was a name for the Milky Way; as being supposed a fingerpost to our Lady's shrine at Walsingham".

And one, according to Hopkins the mediaeval scholar and preacher, Duns Scotus, is referred to here.

More, etc., the poet believes that God would re-unite the people in one faith with greater splendour.

O well wept, the poet turns after his digression to describe the lament of the near relatives of the dead sailors.

Hero savest, the relative pronoun is understood here. The words are supposed to be uttered by the relatives.

Have . . . heard, Christ who hears the poet's prayer now would have foreseen at the time of the shipwreck that the prayer would be offered up later and saved the souls of the sailors.

Souls sunk, etc., though there is no redemption for souls sunk in hell, yet the souls of the drowned sailors are only apparently condemned and hence capable of being saved by prayer—a noble ending for a deeply religious poem.

Fresh, probably flood.

William Ernest Henley, 1849-1903

William Ernest Henley was journalist, critic, essayist, and poet by turns and edited the "London", the "New Review"

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etc. Throughout his life he had to write under extreme physical disability. His poetry, contained in "Book of Verses" (1888), "Song of the Sword" (1892) and "Poems" (1898) is rugged in an unconventional, individualistic way. He strove to transform ugly, commonplace things into the stuff of poetry.

POEM 290. PRO REGE NOSTRO—for our king.

This strikes a stirring patriotic note.

POEM 291. OUT OF THE NIGHT THAT COVERS ME

These lines reveal the indomitable courage that sustained him throughout his life. It was composed while he was in hospital.

Strait, narrow.

Scroll, record of life.

Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850-1894

Robert Louis Stevenson, famous as a novelist, first studied for the Bar, but later turned to literature. He wrote several books of travel and novels, the most notable of them being "Travels with a Donkey", "Treasure Island", "Kidnapped", "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" etc. Soon his health broke down and he was afflicted with a lung disease. Hence he sought the warmer climate of Samoa and settled there for the rest of his life. His poetry, contained in "A Child's Garden of Verses" (1885) and "Ballads" (1891) shows a delicate fancy and exercises a direct appeal with its simple style.

POEM 293. REQUIEM

The poet intended this to be his epitaph.

Requiem, a funeral dirge.

POEM 294. THE VAGABOND

This expresses the longing for a vagrant, open-air life.

Lave, the rest.

POEM 295. THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL

Rime, hoar-frost.

Sir William Watson, 1858-1935

Sir William Watson, as a poet, was a traditionalist in temper and execution. His work shows traces of the influence of Keats and Morris. "Prince's Quest" (1880), "Epigrams of Art, Life and Nature" (1884) and "Wordsworth's Grave" (1890) illustrate his full powers. Though restricted in output, his work reveals careful craftsmanship.

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POEM 297. ODE IN MAY

Pewit, the bird commonly called lapwing.

Ling, heather.

Vestal, virgin consecrated to the worship of Vesta the Roman goddess of virginity.

POEM 298. ENGLAND, MY MOTHER

Demos, people personified.

Lazarus, beggar mentioned in St. Luke XVI.

Dives, Latin for a rich man, used for the richman mentioned in the parable of Lazarus (St. Luke).

Elixir, a liquid with the power of transmuting baser metals into gold.

Thomas Hardy, 1840-1928

Thomas Hardy was a great novelist who took up poetry in old age (1895). Though born in Victorian times, as a poet he is essentially modern in outlook and form. He started life as an architect but the frenzy for writing claimed him. He wrote a vast epic drama "Dynasts" which clearly demonstrates his architectonic skill. His style is a curious mixture of Victorian diction and Dorset dialect. It is also instinct with an ironical contemplation of life.

POEM 299. THE DARKLING THRUSH

Bine-stems, thin stems of climbing plants.

BOOK VII

With this book we come to the twentieth century. The volume of poetical production increases amazingly after the turn of the century. Time alone can decide which of these hundreds of poems will survive. One landmark in poetic development in this age is prominent and that is the opening of the fourth decade. The first thirty years saw the production of verse which more or less corresponded to tradition, but somewhere about 1930 there is a clear break and poets blaze new trails and experiment with new themes, forms and styles. Among the poets of the first quarter of this century Bridges stands out with his high seriousness, mastery of lyrical form and a passionate desire to bring fortitude and peace of mind to the readers by his compositions. Housman's work is characterised by scholarly finish and melody, while Rupert Brooke expresses an intense, epicurean joy in life. Flecker contributes original and fluent metrical verse, while Masfield exhibits a unique mastery of the narrative form. The publication of Hopkins's poems in the second decade con-

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tributed to the break with tradition. Poets tried to express themselves in conversational rhythm and language. They seemed to be profoundly disturbed by the impact of war and its disintegrating effect on human life. The chief spokesman of this school of poets is T. S. Eliot whose "Waste Land" reflects the mood of barren despair characteristic of the post-war scene. Along with him there are some younger poets like Day Lewis and Auden with a progressive political philosophy which they try to communicate through their works. Modern poets claim to have freed poetry from the restrictions of metre by the introduction of Free Verse reflecting the influence of the sprung rhythm of Hopkins.

Robert Bridges, 1844-1930

Robert Bridges first followed the medical profession and then took up poetry. His chief works include "The Growth of Love" (1876-1898), "Eros and Psyche" (1885), "Shorter Poems" (1890, 1894) and "New Poems" (1899). In his eighty-fifth year he published a major philosophical poem "The Testament of Beauty". He was created Poet Laureate in 1913. He also published some anthologies and a critical essay on "Milton's Prosody". He is considered to be the greatest lyric poet since Shelley. Classical in spirit and temper he reveals a fine sense of form and appreciation of beauty; to him idealised abstractions seem to be concrete, living, and meaningful things. The familiar beauty of the countryside has been reproduced by him in verse with exquisite delicacy. His diction and feeling for words are those of a scholar who has lived with words and found them vital and significant. He was also a great prosodical experimenter and based his versification on what he called "speech-stress". Like Milton he had a noble and exalted sense of his calling.

POEM 300. THERE IS A HILL

Myosote, forget-me-not.

Fleur-de-lys, the iris or flag-flower.

Nenuphars, water-lilies, a Sanskrit word.

Gibbous, swelling out, usually applied to the moon when more than half and less than full.

POEM 302. NIGHTINGALES

The poet goes back to the classical legend about the origin of the nightingale and its song, according to which the nightingale sings out of sorrow and pain and unrealised longing for communication of its ideas to others. He adds to that idea another conception that the bird sings out of unsatisfied desire for perfection. This is in deliberate contrast to the central theme in Keats's great ode that the nightingale sings out of fulness of joy.

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The first stanza contains a question and the second and third present the reply of the nightingales.

Stanza 1. The speaker believes that the nightingales draw inspiration for their song from beautiful valleys, murmuring brooks, and starlit woods.

Stanza 2. The nightingales refute the assumption. The mountains where they live are barren and the streams dried up. They sing out of agony and longing and unfulfilled desires.

Stanza 3. Sweet-springing meads, meadows covered with fragrant flowers.

Choir of day, morning song-birds

Alfred Edward Housman, 1859-1936

A classical scholar who served as Professor of Poetry at London and Cambridge Universities, Housman published two slender volumes of verse, "A Shropshire Lad" (1896) and "Last Poems" (1922). They contained some beautiful and melodious lyrics which appealed by their clarity, sincerity, and felicitous language. Their Stoic philosophy and simplicity of diction have profoundly influenced many younger contemporaries. Their bitterly contemplative mood is redeemed by love of beauty and such human ideals as friendship.

POEM 303. VERSES FROM "A SHROPSHIRE LAD"

(i) Reveals the poet's exquisite sense of beauty.

Wearing white, covered with snow.

Threescore years and ten, the Biblical span of life.

(ii) The poet regrets that he cannot recapture the vanished contentment of his youth.

(iii) The poet derives consolation and courage to be reconciled with his lot from a Greek statue. He feels out of his element in the modern world. The statue is supposed to speak the passage within quotation marks.

Grecian gallery, in the British Museum.

Quit you, acquit yourself, endure with patience.

Sir Henry Newbolt, 1862-1938

Sir Henry Newbolt, after early education at Clifton and Oxford practised as a barrister till 1899. In 1928 he became the Official Historian of the Admiralty. His poetical output included "Admirals All" (1897), "The Island Race" (1898), "Songs of the Sea" (1904), etc. His early poems bear traces of Tennyson's influence. The breezy and swinging rhythm of his sea-songs makes a special appeal to Englishmen.

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POEM 304. HE FELL AMONG THIEVES

The incident is supposed to have taken place in the North-West Frontier Province of India.

Yassîn, a tributary of the Gilgit, rising from the Hindukush and flowing into Kashmir.

From the fifth stanza there is a flash-back of the important events in the past life of the youth.

Brasses, inscriptions on the metal plaques on tombstones.

College eight, the rowing team.

Dons, the College tutors.

POEM 305. DRAKE'S DRUM

This is a typical sea-song reminding Englishmen of their great naval tradition and heritage. The spirit of Drake is supposed to encourage British sailors in times of danger and invasion. The achievement of Drake in the defeat of the Spanish Armada forms one of the most glorious pages in the naval history of Britain. As Drake hailed from Devonshire the poem is appropriately in the Devon dialect.

Nombre Dios Bay, Drake died at sea and his body weighted with shot was thrown into this bay near the Isthmus of Panama.

Ar! all.

Plymouth Hoe, a promontory adjoining Plymouth town.

Yarnder lumes, yonder looms.

Dons, Spaniards, here any enemies.

The old trade, war at sea.

William Butler Yeats, 1865-1939

William Butler Yeats is the poet of the transition from the late nineteenth century to the modern age. As a result his work partakes of the characteristics of both the periods. His early poetry is full of imaginative beauty, symbolism, and music; but his later poems are tinged with a spirit of disillusionment. In the former we hear the voice of the dreamer who created a new mythology, in the latter we recoil from the harsh and strident satire. He also helped to found the Irish National Theatre and wrote some plays specially for the institution.

POEM 306. THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

The poem is a supreme expression of a mystical longing for peace and beauty. The island, an imaginary place, stands for a remote, unattainable spiritual home. The masterly handling of liquid consonants in the fourth line and of nasals in the seventh and eighth is noteworthy.

Wattles, thin branches of trees, interlaced.

Pavements Gray, of the city of the poet's exile.

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Hilaire Belloc, 1870

Hilaire Belloc, son of a French lawyer and an English mother, was educated at Birmingham and Oxford. He is an author of remarkable versatility having written poems, essays, novels, and historical works. He has also produced a considerable body of children's verse that attracts old and young alike. Glorification of natural beauty in the countryside is one of the main themes in his serious work.

POEM 309. DUNCTON HILL

The poet feels that one who passionately loves nature will be incorporated with it after death.

Substantiate, made one in substance with.

POEM 310. THE SOUTH COUNTRY

Waste fells, barren hills.

Sussex weald, open woodland.

William Henry Davies, 1871-1940

His poetry has been hailed as the nearest approach to pure simplicity. It is like the spontaneous flute-note of a bird. He sprang into prominence with his "Autobiography of a Super-Tramp" (1908) in which he has recorded his experiences as a tramp and pedlar in England and America. His published verse includes "Poet's Pilgrimage" (1918), "Forty New Poems" (1918), "Song of Life" (1920), etc. He is an isolated literary phenomenon. He strikes an intensely personal note showing deep love of nature and leisure. His style is fresh and exhibits great verbal felicity.

POEM 312. THE KINGFISHER

Tears, rain drops; according to classical mythology Iris, the goddess of the rainbow, was the daughter of the mournful Electra.

Trees that weep, like the willow with drooping leaves. In the last stanza the poet emphasizes the kinship between him and the bird.

Sigh, make a rustling noise by the wind blowing softly through the hanging branches and leaves.

Walter de la Mare, 1873-

Born of British parents, he worked as a reviewer for various journals. He published "Collected Poems" (1920), "The Veil and Other Poems" (1921), etc. He has written many poems of childhood. There is a magical, faery element in his poetry

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that transcends time and space. His poetic land is an enchanted garden, remote and mysterious, peopled by allegorical figures. He has a keen appreciation of the supernatural and is extremely sensitive to psychic influences. He is capable of producing an intense concentrated effect from commonplace facts and ideas.

POEM 313. ARABIA

Here the poet describes the fascination exercised on his mind by the fabled lands of the east with their mystery and romance, beauty and music.

Ghostly moon, pale, thin moon.

Mirk, feeble light.

Coldly, people think he is bewitched.

Stolen his wits, cf. The knight in Keats's "LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI" who wanders in a twilight land, struck with love.

POEM 314. ALL THAT'S PAST

This sings of the immortality and antiquity of natural beauty.

Solomon, an ancient king mentioned in the Bible, noted for his wisdom.

Nature is instinct with all the history of the world; hence human life is but a spark when compared to her eternal glow.

POEM 315. A RIDDLE

A-blow, flowering.

Eerie stave, weird, unearthly song.

Riddle of nature and man, Does nature manifest herself only through human consciousness, or does she exist independently so that man comes into the earth and in his pride and enjoyment of nature's beauty, forgets the Creator?

Maurice Baring, 1874-1945

Maurice Baring, after early education at Eton and Cambridge, entered the diplomatic service. He worked at the Foreign Office and served in the First World War. His published works include "Collected Poems" (1925), "The Coat without Seam" (1928), etc. His poems reveal a deep love of nature and a mastery of musical effects. Though he personally believed that poetry and art are creations of the moment and have only a temporary appeal his work is likely to endure.

POEM 317. IN MEMORIAM, A. H.

Probably the greatest elegiac and memorial poem of the first half of this century, this is very popular and oft-quoted. Set against the background of war and the waste of noble life it has

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poignant associations to those who had lived through those night-mare years. It is a noble tribute to a noble life.

Shot-riddled banners, floating strips of cloud, lit by the sun.

Sanctuary of light, the openings in the cloud seem to be vistas leading to glorious, heavenly cities.

Chrysolite, green-gold crystal.

Oriflammes, banners, here cloud-strips.

The poet remembers an evening when he and his friend had observed the beauty of nature and wondered when the war would end. They had not known that it would be the last they were to spend together.

Remoter still, the war never seemed to end.

This or that, the end of the world, or of the war. In the third stanza the poet enumerates the noble qualities that endeared his friend to everyone—a love of nature and freedom and a divine unrest that inspired a desire to wander.

Fretted, chafed restlessly.

Sterner guide, the call of war.

Shrive, purify.

The reconstructed world shall remove the horrors of war and the devastation perpetrated by them.

Hector, son of Priam, King of Troy, a great warrior.

Achilles, a Greek prince, the hero of Homer's "Iliad".

High, etc. The hero of the poem died in an air battle. The poet here sounds a note of reconciliation. His friend's death was a fitting conclusion to a noble career. His was not an unfulfilled life. His whole life had evolved as a beautiful and significant pattern and the heroic end was natural and inevitable.

Maimed, already wounded.

The poet believes that in the heavenly city his friend would have found some heroes to welcome him.

Knights of the table round, the band of noble knights organised by the legendary King Arthur to fight evil.

Lancelot and Tristram, members of the Round Table.

King, Arthur.

Long expected guest, cf. "Adonais" where Keats is welcomed to a vacant throne on a star.

Lucifer, the fallen angel who revolted against God.

Gordon Bottomley, 1874-1948

Born and educated at Keighley he distinguished himself by winning the literary prize in Paris (1923) and the Medal of the Royal Society of Literature (1925). His chief works are "Gruach and Britain's Daughter" (1921), "Poems of Thirty Years" (1925), etc. He is best known for his revival of the poetic drama. Simple and supple in rhythm, his poetry anticipated the work of the Imagists.

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POEM 318. TO IRONFOUNDERS AND OTHERS

The poem is a passionate protest against the desecration of nature's beauty and fertility by a mechanistic civilization—a vandalism that had aroused the wrath of Ruskin in the previous century.

Brought down. The sky is brought nearer by the clouds of smoke produced by man's inventions but heaven is farter off. Man has conquered Nature, but in his lust for power has lost his soul.

Huge deeds, vainglorious achievements without moral significance.

Old idols, the furnaces which drive the machines are compared to the idols to which human sacrifices were made, as mentioned by Milton.

Tettered, covered with pustular eruptions.

Shards, broken stones.

Ganglions, worm-casts.

Middens, refuse-heaps.

At the end the poet envisages the time when machines would be destroyed to produce ploughshares and chisels for the real glorification of man.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton, 1874-1936

After early education at St. Paul's School, Chesterton, followed journalism. He is well known for his short stories and essays. "The Wild Knight and other poems" (1900) and "The Ballad of the White Horse" (1911) are some of his poetical works. He is a brilliant satirist with a religious mission. His poems are full of epithets and images of battle, but show real sympathy with the weak and suffering.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, 1878-

Born in Northumberland, he served in the ranks in the First World War. His poetical works include "Daily Bread" (1910), "Thoroughfares" (1914), "Battle" (1915), "Collected Poems" (1926), "Islands" (1932), etc. His achievement in poetry shows considerable bulk and growth. He started as a romantic, but later the contemporary industrial life claimed him as its chief interpreter. He has sung of the heroism of common humanity in the living idiom of their talk. His diction is conversational in rhythm.

POEM 320. FLANNAN ISLE

In this stark poem the known facts of a mystery that have never been explained are faithfully adhered to. Flannan Isle is off the north-west coast of Scotland.

Shag, the crested cormorant.

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John Masefield, 1878-

John Masefield went to sea as a boy and worked on ships. He started writing poetry in 1900 and attained considerable fame with his "Salt-Water Ballads" (1902). Then came a realistic, narrative poem, "The Everlasting Mercy" (1911) followed by "The Widow in the Bye Street", "Dauber" and "Reynard the Fox". His shorter poems have been included in several anthologies. He is a born story-teller, deriving his inspiration and technique from Chaucer. He succeeded Bridges as Poet Laureate. He himself confessed that he was not concerned with Princes and Prelates but wished to sing of the working men, sailors, and stokers. His poems reveal an immense zest for life and adventure and the potentialities of common life.

POEM 321. FRAGMENTS

The poet sings of the immortality of human ideals as sources of inspiration.

Orts, scraps

Simois, river flowing near Troy.

Waps, laps, moves noisily.

City of the soul, idealized conception of beauty and romance.

Empery, power.

Atlantis, an island believed to exist near the Straits of Gibraltar by the ancients.

Babilu, a town in Egypt, not to be confused with Babylon the great

Scrawl, crab.

POEM 322. SEA-FEVER

The poem is a beautiful expression of the passion of the sea and its enchantment which holds a man ever in thrall.

POEM 323. LAUGH AND BE MERRY

This illustrates the joy of life. The poet exhorts us to resist wrong with mirth and bring about universal brotherhood.

Patrick Chalmers, 1872-

POEM 324. ROUNDABOUTS AND SWINGS

This is the record of a conversation with a gipsy who is taking his waggon to a fair at Framlingham-on-Sea.

Framlingham, a market-town in Suffolk.

Pharaoh, a gipsy.

Lurcher, a dog trained to hunt game.

Up and down, in the swings.

Round and round, in the roundabouts.

NOTES

Harold Monro, 1879-1932

Born in Brussels and educated at Cambridge, Monro founded the Poetry Bookshop in 1912, which served as a literary centre. He also started the "Poetry Review" as the organ of the younger poets. His works include "Judas" (1907), "Before Dawn" (1911), "Children of Love" (1914), "Trees" (1916), etc. His verse explores the relation of man to nature and is a mixture of reality and fantasy. It is full of high emotional intensity and skilful rhythm.

Padraic Colum, 1881-

Born in Ireland Mr. Colum helped to found the Irish National Theatre, for which he has written several plays. He has settled down in America. His poetry includes "Wild Earth" (1907) and "Creatures" (1927).

POEM 326. THE PLOUGHER

Wotan, the Norse-god Odin.

Dana, the mother of the ancient Irish gods.

Martin Armstrong, 1882-

Born in Newcastle-on-Tyne and educated at Oxford he served in the War of 1914-18. He produced "Exodus" (1912), "Thirty New Poems" (1918) and "Buzzards" For four years he was associate editor of the "Spectator". His early verse attracted no attention but "Buzzards" aroused some interest.

John Drinkwater, 1882-1891

John Drinkwater was connected with insurance business for several years. He helped to start the Birmingham Repertory Theatre. He wrote poetry, dramas and several critical studies. "Olton Pools" (1916) and "Seeds of Time" (1921) are some of his poetical works, while "Abraham Lincoln" and "Oliver Cromwell" are his best-known dramas. His poetry, though bearing no mark of his time, springs from the English soil. It is full of dignity and follows tradition.

POEM 328. THE CLOUDS

The poet with his love of nature and a quiet life feels ill-attuned with the militant spirit of the times.

Tarn, mountain-lake.

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James Elroy Flecker, 1884-1915

Flecker studied at Oxford and entering the Consular Service worked at Smyrna and Constantinople in the near East. He wrote two plays and several poems. His early death was a great blow to English literature. His poetry does not attempt to teach anything. It shows a reaction against realism and a distinct oriental influence. He believed that the poet's business was not to save souls but to make them worth saving. His verse is fluent, original, and musical.

POEM 329. TO A POET A THOUSAND YEARS HENCE

Maeonides, another name for Homer, from Maeonia or Lydia his birth-place.

POEM 330. BRUMANA

Similar in tone and sentiment to Browning's "Home thoughts from Abroad" this poem expresses a deep love of English soil and longing to be there. Brumana is the name of a health resort in the mountains near Beirut, where the poet lived for a time during his last illness. There are many pine trees there and also near the sea in the south of England.

Militia, the pines standing as sentinels.

The snowy mountains, Mount Lebanon.

Runic, whispered, secret.

POEM 331. THE WAR-SONG OF THE SARACENS

The Saracens were a warlike Arab tribe who ranged from Persia to Spain in their military expeditions.

Pale Kings, Pale-complexioned western kings.

Samet, a rich fabric of silk and gold threads interwoven.

Balghar, the city of the tribe of that name.

Rum, another name for Constantinople.

Jalula, a Persian fortress.

Rock of Stamboul, a stone-pillar at Constantinople erected to commemorate a Roman victory in the 3rd century A.D.

Sir John Squire, 1884-

Sir John Squire became famous as a parodist. He invented a new technique in parody by rendering the ideas of one poet in the style of another. After the first World War he turned to serious poetry which possesses great distinction.

POEM 332. THE LILY OF MALUD

A poem of exquisite beauty that tells of a lily which blossomed and died in one night in the centre of a forest.

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Moth-feet, feet making no more sound than a moth's.
Boles, trunks.

POEM 333. THE DISCOVERY

An ironical comment on the discovery of the New World by Columbus, which brought tragedy and destruction in its wake.

Edith Sitwell, 1887-

Edith Sitwell became famous with her brothers for her wartime anthology "Wheels" (1916) which heralded a violent revolt against the popular poetry of the day. Her publications include "The Mother and other poems" (1915) and "Wooden Pegasus" (1920). Her poetry is a mixture of pastoral and satire. It is intensely personal and allusive. She has a wonderful sense of verbal texture and achieves profound effect by her startling images and metaphors.

POEM 334. THE SWANS

Gloxinia, etc., garden flowers.
Solar, bright as the sun.

POEM 335. HOW MANY HEAVENS

Emeralds, green plants.

POEM 336. HEART AND MIND

Hercules and Samson, strong heroes of ancient times.
Pillars of the seas, the Pillars of Hercules.
Crone, old woman.

POEM 337. MOST LOVELY SHADE

Syrinx, an Arcadian nymph changed by the gods into a tree to escape from Pan.

Dryope, a princess, beloved of Apollo, she was subsequently changed into a nymph.

Nymph that changed into a tree, Daphne was pursued by Apollo and changed into the laurel.

Mary Elizabeth Coleridge, 1861-1907

Mary Elizabeth Coleridge, the great-grandniece of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, became a scholar in her teens. She admired Browning and Tolstoy and was influenced by Cory. She devoted herself to social service and taught at the Working Women's College. Bridges encouraged her to publish her poetry which includes "Fancy's Following" (1896). Her collected poems were posthumously published. Bridges compares her to Blake on account of her deep religious conviction.

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POEM 338. EGYPT'S MIGHT IS TUMBLED DOWN

A short but beautiful poem which contrasts the transience of imperial glory with the permanence of spiritual achievement, ideals, and aspirations.

David Herbert Lawrence, 1885-1930

David Herbert Lawrence, novelist, short-story writer and poet, was the son of a Nottingham coal-miner. His poetical works include "Love Poems and Others" (1913), "Amores" (1916), etc. A passionate individualist, he felt deeply the horrors and waste of war and made his own unhappy loneliness the stuff of his literary creations. He attempted to express the ugliness of lower class life in the native idiom. But due to his lack of discipline his poems seem to be more embryos than finished products.

POEM 339. SNAKE

Carob-tree, a common tree in Mediterranean countries, producing nutritious pods.

I thought of the Albatross, cf. Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" in which supernatural forces punish the mariner for killing the sea-bird, the albatross.

Siegfried Sassoon, 1886-

Siegfried Sassoon was educated at Cambridge and fought in the 1914 war. His early poems were anonymously printed. With the publication of "Counter-attack" (1918) he took his place as a brilliant rising poet. His lyric idealism is sometimes tempered by his satire and more often by his overmastering passion at the degradation and futility of war. His "Heart's Journey" (1928) contains the distilled essence of post-war years.

POEM 340. EVERYONE SANG

The poem is supposed to be set against the background of the Armistice (1918). The sudden cessation of war motivated the outburst of liberating, endless song described here.

Rupert Brooke, 1887-1915

Rupert Brooke was educated at Rugby and Cambridge and travelled widely in Europe and America. He fought in the 1914 war in Belgium and Gallipoli and died of sunstroke. His "Collected Poems" posthumously published (1918) shows what a promising career was cut short by the blind chance of war. He summed up the spirit of the age with his burning patriotism and

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gallant courage. His love of beauty and nature, intensity of feeling, and clarity of insight characterise him as a singer denied scope to do great things.

POEM 341. THE OLD VICARAGE, GRANTCHESTER

Another poem comparable to Browning's "Home-thoughts, from Abroad" and Flecker's "Brumana" in its spiritual nostalgia for the beloved homeland. It is a kind of lyrical reverie, woven of different strands, desire for home, description of English scenery, and satirical contemplation of racial differences. After graduation Brooke lived at Grantchester, a village near Cambridge full of literary associations. When sitting at a Berlin Café memories of the peaceful beauty of the English countryside come to him with an aching intensity. Suddenly his mood changes and the surrounding scene sets him on to contrast with a sly humour the national genius of Germany with that of England—the order, method, and discipline of the former reflected even in nature and the uncontrolled individualism of the latter shown in the riotous, irregular variety and profusion of vegetation.

Du Lieber Gott, German for "Dear God".

Temperamentvoll, sentimental.

Unkempt, untidily.

Unofficial. . . unregulated. . . unpunctual; humorous epithets tilting at Teutonic thoroughness and regulation that seek to control even Nature that flowers in disorderly beauty in England.

Das betreten-verboten, trespass forbidden. The Greek phrase in the first line of the third stanza is translated in the second half of the same line.

Faun, a semi-divine creature in classical mythology.

Naiad, river-nymph.

Goat-foot, Pan, playing on the flute.

His ghostly lordship, the shade of Lord Byron.

Hellespont, strait; the modern Dardanelles; Byron travelled widely in Europe and swam across the Hellespont.

Styx, the dark river in the Underworld mentioned in Greek myths.

Dan Chaucer, the first great English poet (1340-1400) who wrote "The Canterbury Tales".

Lissom, agile.

Printless, being ghosts they will not leave footprints.

Rural Dean, a dignitary of the Episcopal Church.

Royston, etc., villages near Cambridge.

Bosky, filled with bushes.

The yet unacademic stream, the river that has not yet reached the town of Cambridge.

Anadyomene, "risen from the waters"—a phrase applied to Aphrodite, the Greek Goddess of beauty and love.

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POEM 343. THE FISH

In this poem the poet is presenting the world from the point of view of the fish. He is giving form and substance to new sensations and thoughts to create new material that lies outside normal human experience

Fluctuant, mutable, flowing and changing.

Translucency, the quality of allowing light to pass through.

Hyaline, glassy smoothness.

O world of lips, here the poet reverts to the human world.

Thomas Stearns Eliot, 1888-

An American by birth and Englishman by naturalisation, Mr. Eliot, after a varied education at Harvard, the Sorbonne, and Oxford, became the editor of the "Criterion". His first volume of criticism "The Sacred Wood" emphasized the importance of tradition and revived interest in the Metaphysicals. "Prufrock" (1917) his first poetical work was couched in a tone of despair. "Poems" (1917) reflected bitterly the ignoble sordidness of life. His major work was the "Waste Land" (1922) which presented the arid, barren doubt and despair of the post-war scene. "Ash Wednesday" (1930) and "The Rock" (1934) are deeply religious and deal with the significance and function of the Church of England. His "Murder in the Cathedral" (1935) is a play glorifying the Church. His verse though masterly in rhythm and music is extremely difficult and allusive. Along with Hopkins he has been a major influence in modern poetry.

POEM 345. 'CHORUS FROM "MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL"'

This play deals with the murder of Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the time of Henry II. England was then torn by the schism between Church and State. The play shows Becket's martyrdom in his attempt to bring back the state to religion. This chorus, sung by women, occurs at the opening of the second part of the drama.

POEM 346. MACAVITY: THE MYSTERY CAT

Scotland Yard, the headquarters of the London police.

Peke, tiny Pekenese dog

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Julian Grenfell, 1888-1915

Julian Grenfell was educated at Eton and Oxford. He served in the war of 1914 and died in action—another genius cut off in its prime.

POEM 347. INTO BATTLE

The poem was sent home in a letter from Flanders in 1915.
Kestrel, a small hawk.

Walter James Turner, 1889-1946

Walter James Turner was born in Australia and educated at Scotch College, Melbourne. He went to Europe at seventeen. He settled in England and worked as literary editor of the "Daily Herald". His works include "The Hunter and Other Poems" (1916) and "Dark Fire".

POEM 348. THE CAVES OF AUVERGNE

Phallic, reproductive.

Alan Seeger, 1888-1916

Alan Seeger was born in New York and educated at Harvard and Paris. He enlisted in the Foreign Legion in 1914 but his service was a short one as he was killed in action two years later. He was an inspired poet with a fiery spirit, and passionate love of beauty, characteristic of a bygone age. Poetry came to him naturally and spontaneously.

POEM 349. I HAVE A RENDEZVOUS WITH DEATH

This famous poem, prophetic like Shelley's concluding passage in "Adonais", is intolerably painful with a tragic beauty of its

James Stephens, 1882-1950

James Stephens, poet and short-story writer, was born in Ireland. His works include "Deirdre" (1923), "A Poetry Recital" (1925), "Collected Poems" (1926) and "Strict Joy—Poems" (1931). His verse exhibits a delightful blend of incongruities and bears traces of Blake.

Humbert Wolfe, 1885-1940

Humbert Wolfe was born in Milan, Italy. After his University education at Oxford he entered the Civil Service in 1909 and

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served as Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Labour; "London Sonnets" (1920), "Kensington Gardens" (1924) "Requiem" (1927), etc. are some of his publications. His verse is a curious mixture of sincerity and satire, comedy and pathos.

Rose Macaulay

Rose Macaulay attained prominence by the publication of "The Blind Countries" (1914) in which the soul is conceived of as a wanderer in the blind land, the physical world. Highly individual in manner and matter, her poetry is tinged with mysticism and a sense of beauty.

Victoria Sackville-West, 1892-

Victoria Sackville-West, the daughter of Baron Sackville, married the Hon. Harold Nicolson. She has written novels and poetry. "Poems of West and East" (1917), "Orchard and Vineyard" (1921) and "The Land" (1926) are some of her works. She has won the Hawthornden Prize.

Richard Church, 1893-

Richard Church, a Londoner by birth, started writing at eighteen and later entered the Civil Service. "Philip" (1923) and "Theme with Variations" (1928) are among his publications. His verse strikes a sombre note and explores the deep undercurrents of life.

POEM 356. FROM A TWENTIETH-CENTURY PSALTER

Psalter, a book of psalms or a version of them given in the Common Prayer-book.

Like woman, cf. the Biblical version of the creation of woman from Adam's rib.

Wisdom, according to Greek Myths, Athene, the goddess of wisdom, sprang full-panoplied from the head of Zeus.

Edmund Blunden, 1896-

Edmund Blunden was educated at Oxford and saw war service in France. He won the Hawthornden Prize in 1922 and the Benson medal of the Royal Society of Literature in 1930. He served as Professor of English literature in the Tokyo University

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from 1924 to 1927. From 1931 to 1943 he served as Fellow and Tutor in English Literature of Merton College, Oxford. His works include "The Waggoner and Other Poems" (1920), "The Shepherd" (1922). His style is impersonal and objective.

POEM 357. ALMSWOMEN

This presents an appealing picture of the dull, monotonous life led by women in an alms-house. The line "All things they have in common, being so poor", was singled out by J. C. Squire in his review of "The Waggoner" for special praise as being in the grand style.

Cecil Day Lewis, 1904-

Cecil Day Lewis, one of the radical, left-wing poets of this century, who drew inspiration from Hopkins in vocabulary, imagery, and rhythm. He sings of the Social revolution that is to come and cure all the ills of humanity.

POEM 358. A TIME TO DANCE

Are honoured in public who built, those who build. . . are honoured in public.

Wystan Hugh Auden, 1907-

Wystan Hugh Auden, another member of the progressive group who fortified his verse with a political and social message. His poetry is often obscure but is of high imaginative power.

POEM 361. FISH IN THE UNRUFFLED LAKES

The Devil in the clock, the inexorable passage of time.

Louise Macneice, 1907-

Louise Macneice was joint-editor of Oxford Poetry along with Spender (1929) and published a group of poems (1929) which while showing distinct influence of Edith Sitwell, revealed an alert, sensitive mind and astonishing command of crisp, vigorous idiom.

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VERSIFICATION

Though too much should not be made of the technical aspect of poetry, it requires some consideration.

The fundamental element in the rhythm of English verse is a regularized succession of stressed, or accented, syllables. The patterns of alternate accented and unaccented syllables thus produced range, according to poet and period, from complete regularity to extreme irregularity.

The great majority of English poems are written in iambic metre, in which an unaccented syllable is followed by an accented syllable, thus :—

That floats on high o'er vales and hills (No. 160)

Exceptions are :—Nos. 183, 207, 210, 213, 246, 266, 278, 283, 294 ; 184, 185, 188, 197, 200, 235, 270, 288 ; 203, 211, 212, 248, 254, 286, 331 ; 206, 298.

Among these rarer metres are :—

(i) Trochaic (an accented syllable followed by an unaccented syllable as in :—From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue (24 b).

(ii) Anapaestic (two unaccented syllables followed by an accented syllable) as in :—

We are they who came faster than fate ; we are they who ride early or late (331).

(iii) Amphibrachic (an accented syllable preceded and followed by an unaccented syllable) as in
and out of a fabulous story (288)

(iv) Dactylic (an accented syllable followed by two unaccented syllables) as in :—

England my mother

Wardress of waters (298)

These metres are the skeletons of the poet's living creations ; to diversify them and clothe them with beauty, he has at his disposal numerous devices ; and new methods of doing so are always being explored, particularly at the present time.

In the first place, he can introduce variations into the metre itself

(a) By altering the position of an accented syllable, e.g.

Riches I hold in light esteem (No. 263)

(b) By inserting one or more unaccented syllables at the beginning or the end of a line, or within it, e.g.

And he stoppeth one of three (No. 190)

(c) By omitting one or more unaccented syllables, e.g.

Break, break, break,

On they cold gray stones, O sea (No. 248)

These metrical irregularities may be carried to great lengths, as in No. 289 ; they may even be carried so far that the original

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scheme, if there was one, is entirely lost, as in No. 339. A piece written in this manner is said to be written in Free Verse. The defenders of Free Verse maintain that the writer has shaken off the shackles that trammelled his efforts to express himself; its opponents declare that the result is nothing but bad prose.

Secondly, the metre of a poem can be reinforced, or softened, or adorned, by ornaments of many kinds.

The chief mode of reinforcement is rhyme, which is almost universal in English lyrical verse. The only exceptions in this book are Nos. 298, 339, 345, which are entirely devoid of rhyme. Others that at first sight seem to be unrhymed (e.g. Nos. 336, 344, 358, 360, 361) will be found on close examination to contain rhymes. Some poems (e.g. No. 332) are rhymed within as well as at the end of lines.

Alliteration is a frequent ornament. Sometimes, like rhyme, it reinforces the metre, as in

Britannia needs no bulwarks

No towers along the steep

Her march is o'er the mountain waves (No. 195)

More frequently it echoes the meaning, as in

The moan of doves in immemorial elms

And murmuring of innumerable bees.

No set description can give an adequate idea of other and less obvious ways in which verse can be adorned and modulated. The only method by which to gain some notion of the word-music in a particular poem is to examine it in detail.

It must not be supposed that the poet when composing is thinking of trochees, alliteration, and so forth. The rhythm sings in his mind, and possesses him, afterwards he may examine what he has produced, and correct superficial blemishes.

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